THE HORUS HERESY

BOOK EIGHT

MALEVOLENCE

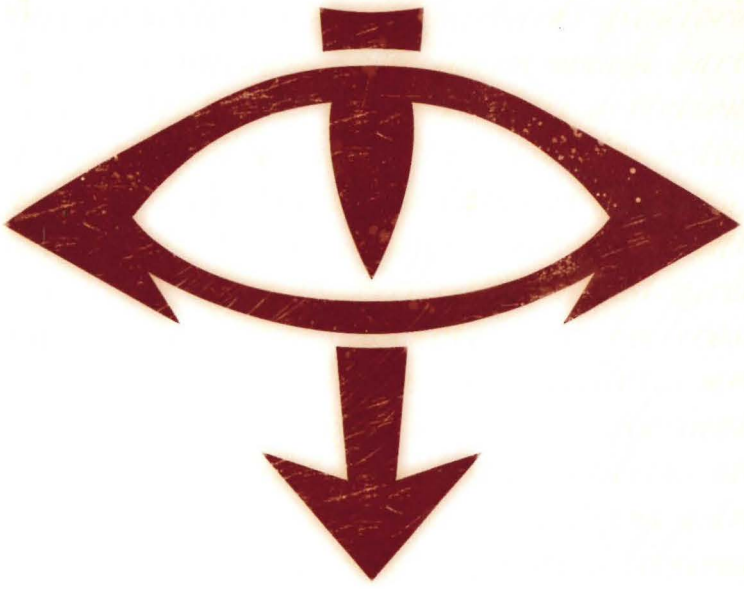
AN INFERNAL BARGAIN IS STRUCK

THE VEIL IS PARTED

AND THE DREAM OF IMPERIUM BECOMES NIGHTMARE

THE HORUS HERESY®

BOOK EIGHT



MALEVOLENCE

A SUPPLEMENT FOR THE HORUS HERESY: AGE OF DARKNESS

PRODUCED BY THE GAMES WORKSHOP SPECIALIST DESIGN STUDIO

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Preface

There is much that the Emperor of Mankind chose to keep hidden. Many dark truths that He sought to shield His Imperium from. Secrets that would scar the minds of mortal men and see us confined to the ruins of Terra by our fear of the beyond. A fear we fought with the Imperial Truth, with the doctrines of science, reason and hope.

We were the bloodied heralds of a new age, and no trace of the terror born of ignorance and superstition was to be allowed to menace our future. Untold billions of lives were sacrificed upon the altar of our Truth in order to see those hidden terrors buried forever. Temples that had stood for millennia were reduced to rubble and entire worlds burned in secret. The truths of the Daemon and the Outsider were buried beneath such a weight of scorn and death that they passed into myth. Mankind forgot its fear of the dark places of the galaxy and dared to stretch forth its hand, to grasp at destiny one last time.

And then the Warmaster, in his arrogance and fear, cast open the grave where we had buried those secrets. He unleashed them as his hounds of war upon a galaxy unprepared for their return, understanding little the consequences of his actions. Without remorse he set loose the Daemon and gave new hope to the Outsider. He sought to chain Chaos itself as a weapon for his cause, sought to master that force that the Emperor Himself rejected and scorned. Horus was a fool, and it is those of us who survived who shall pay the price for his arrogance. His rebellion, his great heresy, was to not merely be a war of brother against brother, not just a conflagration of blood and fire that would scorch the very gates of Terra black, but also a battle for the very soul of humanity. Though many remember only the horrors that Horus unleashed during the assault on the Emperor's Palace, this battle was begun long before that apocalyptic confrontation. It was fought under the bleak light of the star known as Signus, where an Angel was trapped on the threshold of hell. It was fought at Chondax, where the pathfinders of the Great Crusade wandered in the kingdom of the blind. It was fought across the Imperium, as those loyal to a Truth fashioned from lies struggled with a desperate bravery to seal away that which Horus had unleashed. Yet, despite our victory, despite all of our vain sacrifices, I fear that Horus has opened a door that we may never be able to close again.

I saw with eyes then young, and this is my testament. I was there when Tallarn burned and Keoptis drowned in oceans of blood. I witnessed the skies of Terra riven with lightning on the day the Warmaster came and hell followed with him. I heard the funeral bell toll for the Emperor of Mankind and wept.

I remember.

AK

The Hidden War

"Great actions have shaped our society, the greatest of which, intellectually, has been our casting off of that heavy mantle called religion. Religion damned our species for thousands of years, from the lowest superstition to the highest conclaves of spiritual faith. It drove us to madness, to war, to murder; it hung upon us like a disease. Faith, belief in demons, spirits and an afterlife were simple tools for simple minds to which the vastness of the cosmos was beyond comprehension. It is all ignorance and lies. We have since realised that there are no gods, and no need for gods. We have witnessed the cosmos now, my friends, we have learned and understand the fabric of reality."

Iterator Prime Kyril Sindermann, on the Imperial Truth

In every human civilisation, in every lost and found corner of the galaxy, there are demons. Some of these are the demons that Mankind has manufactured for itself, others still the perfidious and misunderstood influence of the xenos, the Outsider, and yet some still, though the Emperor felt it right to deny our knowledge of such, are truly Other. Daemons are real and unreal. This is what we have learned from the tragic events of the Age of Darkness, if no other lessons are to be remembered. It is vital that we share this knowledge, preserve it and learn from it, that we may gird ourselves against the threats of the galaxy and attempt to dispel the evils of the future. To dwell in ignorance now, when the golden light of the Emperor which shielded us from the outer darkness is so diminished, would doom not only the body of Mankind, but its very soul.

The Imperial Truth

The Imperial Truth was the rational, atheist philosophy that guided the Emperor's conquest of Old Earth, and the formation of the Imperium through the Great Crusade. At its heart, the Imperial Truth held that the universe was rational, that knowledge defeated fear and brought freedom from the terrors of the Age of Strife. With this assertion went the denial of the irrational and the superstitious, as well as the abandoning of faith in powers and principles beyond the knowable. In the unified Terra and Imperium of Mankind, there could be no mysteries of the soul, no sorcery, no gods. Those who clung to their ignorance were cast down, their lies silenced in the pyre's roar. The terrors of the past had grown in the shadow of superstition and false belief. If Mankind was to survive its rebirth, it could not tolerate the delusions of the past. That there were other dimensions, alien races and mutants who wielded psychic powers was not denied, only that they were supernatural. That some might call these phenomena '*sorcery*', or attribute them to gods, were simply the symptoms of incomplete understanding. With a foundation built upon the tenets of the Imperial Truth, Mankind achieved greatness, and though it was not destined to last, for two centuries the Great Crusade was beyond reproach in its methods and in its glorious elevation of Mankind to the dominant species of the galaxy.

Of course, there was a degree to which the Imperium and the Emperor touched upon the irrational and ethereal. The new Imperium had grown from the past, and secular though it might be, much of its power and nature expressed itself in ways that had echoes of the spiritual. In practises such as the taking of Oaths of Moment, the names of the divisions of Imperial power and the symbols of that power, the Imperium wrapped itself in the clothes of authority woven from dreams that were as old as the gods it denied. And Mankind continued to have faith, faith in the omniscience and benevolence of the Emperor and His designs, faith through reason, in the Imperial Truth. Perhaps this was an intended spiritual crutch; that the Emperor in His wisdom saw the failings in the primitive hindbrain of every man and woman in His service, and recognised that He could only cast down the demagogue and the pontifex in this way – that He could only destroy the spiritual by using the language of religion, by preaching the faith of the empirical and the rational.

The Great Lie

From the seemingly endless cycle of tragedy and death Horus unleashed, it has become clear to all that at the heart of the Imperial Truth was a lie. This Great Lie, promulgated by the Emperor who now sits eternal upon His throne, is that of a calculated and hidden ignorance within the doctrine of enlightenment. Those amongst us who had truly seen behind the stars knew that the Lie resided there all along, clearest in the darkness, though we feared to think of it and dared not speak of it: the Warp is alive with malignant sentience, the very essence of which is supernatural. These unquiet spirits, which reside in the Warp, sate themselves upon the souls of mortals. Those of us that remain must examine the consequences of our silence and the toll the Great Lie has taken.

The first of these consequences may appear to us now to be the most terrible; that of Horus' rebellion. By turning his face from the light of his Father, Horus not only brought ruin to the Imperium but also empowered the beings of the Warp to cross from their empyreal realm into ours. It is claimed that Horus was closest to his father among the Primarchs, and that the Emperor shared with him all of His accumulated wisdom. This can only be a falsehood, for Horus must have learned of the power of the immaterial from some other source – the Emperor would otherwise surely have warned off His son from the dangers of the forces he came to enter into a compact with.

The White Scars Legion Primarch, Jaghatai Khan, mused upon returning to Terra that, "*It was the knowledge that the Emperor had concealed His true purpose from His favoured son that led to Horus' downfall. In Horus' mind, the suspicion took root that he may not have been his father's favourite; after all, my brother Magnus knew more of the Warp and Corax more of the darkness within Mankind. This must be what broke Horus' will*". Captain Loken, a survivor of Isstvan III, is heard to have countered bitterly, "*It was simply the realisation that the Emperor was not infallible, as all sons learn of their fathers, which set Horus' heart to fester*". It is impossible to say now, for Horus too is dead and his ashes reveal nought.

There have been other costs incurred by the Great Lie which have undermined the Emperor's dream of Imperium. Many billions of lives were lost in the purges required to maintain it. Ancient civilisations, directly descended from Old Earth, who carried with them across the cosmos the torch of religions deemed anathema in this enlightened age were simply murdered for their beliefs. Tens of thousands of cities were burned, cultures were put to the sword and worlds were annihilated in the name of the Truth. Ignorance was promoted hand-in-hand with enlightenment across the stars. The stability and safety of ignorance was used as a tool, an opiate to the blissful masses, through which they would remain unquestioning. With ignorance and death as the tools used to promote wisdom we have made vulnerable the very foundations of our Imperium. Who can say now which among the inheritors of His kingdom will be the first to use the ignorance of blind faith as a weapon?

There is a final and more dire consequence, one which will reveal itself in the due course of time. While we have ostensibly suffered the treachery of civil war, a greater war has begun which will yet blight the future of Mankind. Now that son has turned upon father, brother upon brother, and the Imperium's greatest defenders have been brought to their knees, we may never attain the greatness of galactic dominance that the Emperor intended for us. Therein lies the problem, for in his reckless ambition, Horus has mortally wounded the Imperium. The Outsider, the alien threat which we spent two glorious centuries casting from our borders has been given reprieve. Moreover,

the very fabric of reality has been altered and terrors previously unknown have turned their eyes upon us. The xenos and the Daemon can never allow us to recover our might; they will always seek to harm us, for in our vulnerability they find strength. In our weakened state, these antagonists approach now, encircling their bleeding prey like the ichthyan predators of Old Earth.

The Necessity of the Lie

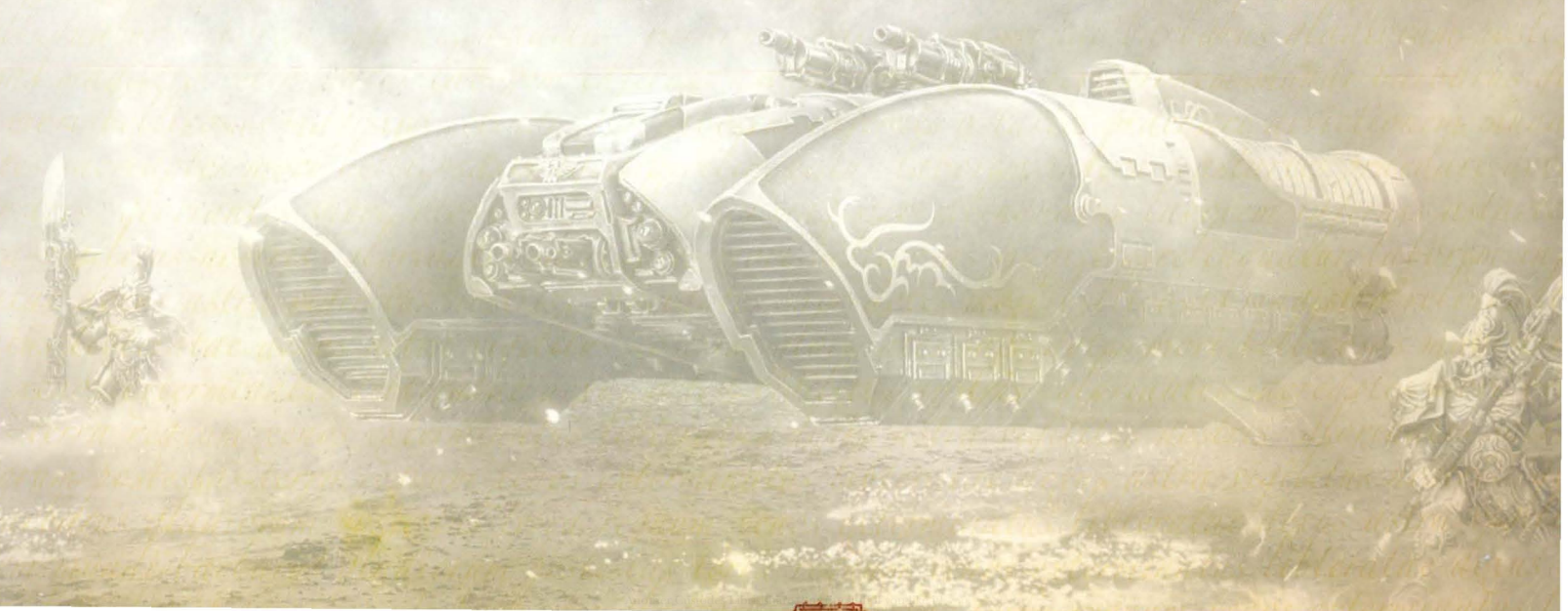
Though the learned now question the complex and delicate balance of philosophies the Imperial Truth put into motion, for all that came to pass the Emperor was no fool. He was without doubt aware of the hypocrisies fundamental to the tenets of the Imperial Truth. That the beings within the Empyrean pose a danger to the Imperium is without question, but to suppress their nature rather than to educate His subjects, to deny enlightenment in the Age of Enlightenment, cannot have been a path lightly trod. It can only be concluded that the Emperor was aware of the risks and enacted a calculated strategy to protect His greater purpose.

The need for the Great Lie is a matter of some speculation. Some have argued that the Emperor's goal was to defeat death itself by excising the soul and that knowledge of the existence of a soul would be our downfall. Others that He sought to enter the mind of every human being in the galaxy and alternatively impart His phenomenal knowledge or His psychic gifts, creating an ultimate, ascended race of Mankind. Yet others have quietly suspected that He wished nothing less than dominion over all of reality and unreality, and hid the supernatural nature of unreality such that no being would dare challenge His claim upon it. Darker rumours, those which were whispered during the days of the Emperor's seclusion on Terra, surmise that He sought to reach the apotheosis of godhood for Himself, leaving Mankind behind with the cold revelation that the Imperial Truth was a lie and the gods real.

Whatever the case, it was clear to the Imperium from His retreat to Terra at the pinnacle of the Great Crusade, the disappearance of his golden legions, as well as the endless parade of men and machines descending into the Imperial Dungeon, that some vast and intensive artifice was underway, which served only to fuel further speculation. It may even have been that the entirety of the Great Crusade served only to acquire the mysteries and materiel required to meet another objective, and that the Imperial Truth was simply a means to an end – never intended to withstand a test such as that which the Traitors brought against it. The truth to these rumours and the Emperor's Great Work are matters too weighty to discuss at this juncture and must instead be revealed at a later time.

Knowledge could have been Mankind's greatest weapon. The sword of knowledge racing across the stars with the Great Crusade could have empowered Mankind to know the Daemon and to combat its insidious presence. The shield of ignorance with which the Emperor hoped to protect us could only ever stymie the flood of darkness, never halt its onslaught. It frayed and buckled as any shield is wont to with the hammering of the enemy upon it. His gamble with the fate of humanity was a failure, and His denial of the true nature of the Warp a mistake. The Emperor could have stopped all of this, Horus' rebellion, the ascendance of the Warp and the ruination of the Imperium, if only He had told His sons and His subjects the truth.

Though the Emperor's plan may have failed, surely no one, alive or dead, could have known more of the consequences of His decisions? Had we but known what the Emperor did, could any of us have made a wiser choice in His place? Regardless, none can be sure of the ultimate solution He foresaw, only that the threat must be countered. The duty now falls to those few of us who remain with the knowledge required to protect the Imperium; we must illuminate Mankind as to the nature and threat of the Daemon and the Outsider.



Selected Encounters of Esoteric Phenomena

992.M29
The Ninth Battle of Xozer: In the Nordafrik Conclaves of Old Earth inexplicable ephemeral phenomenon are encountered during the battle where Kalagann, the techno-barbarian warlord of Ursh is slain. The kingdom of Ursh is brought to heel by the Emperor's forces.

798.M30
The First Action of the Great Crusade: During the First Pacification of Luna, the XVIth Legion encounters evidence of occultism amongst the Selenar gene-wrights. The Selenar methodology is sequestered into the Imperial Dungeon.

799.M30
The Vhnori Resurgence: The Crimson Walkers emerge to challenge the Unity of the Panpacific Enclaves. They make use of their unrestrained psychic might to dominate the minds of the populace and animate golems stitched of dead flesh, but are brutally wiped out by the VIIIth Legion in a campaign which pitches terror against the terrors.

803.M30
The Liberation of Sol: During the Sedna Campaign, eight full Legions are deployed to undertake the destruction of the xenos nemesis world, whereupon they expunge an alien faction bound to war by unknown psychic means. In the aftermath, the false world of Sedna falls into silence and is lost to Imperial auspices.

848.M30
The Suppression of Sarosh: After an assassination attempt on the newly found Dark Angels Primarch Lion El'Jonson, it is discovered that the Saroshi bureaucracy system is a cover for a cult supposedly communing with xenos entities from an alternate dimension. The Dark Angels and forces from the 4th Expeditionary Fleet eliminate all traces of the cult.

858.M30
The Purging of Arachiana: The Word Bearers, newly reunited with their Primarch, are tasked with the destruction of the Cult of the Iconoclast on Arachiana; a religion worshipping the '*One True God*', a being described in the same terms as, but darkly distinct from the Emperor. The tenets of this religion would be incorporated into an early version of the *Book of Lorgar*.

866.M30
The Grael Library: The crowning achievement of Riohbia, the self-proclaimed warlocks guarding the proscribed works of the Grael Library refuse to yield its contents to the Imperium. The XIXth Legion, prosecuting the campaign of Compliance in the system, are tasked with quashing the psychic threat and destroying the library. En-route, however, they receive a communiqué stating that a passing fleet of the Thousand Sons Legion has intervened and dealt with the threat already.

881.M30
The Majind Torc Transgression: During the devastation of the second Rangdan Xenocide, a Basemekanic Barq breaks the cordon of the galactic north-east to make impact at Majind. The Death Guard Legion in pursuit are decimated as the Macrobeest within is activated by unknown means. Only the quick thinking intervention of the VIth Legion prevents disaster.

903.M30
The Defence of Tranquillity: The Emperor's Children Legion defend a series of ancient crystalline gates claimed by the Imperium in the Dalinite Nebula against an unknown xenos fleet, which emerges from these gates, making rapid Warp translations between them. The IIIrd Legion eventually overpowers the xenos and drives them back whence they came.

921.M30
The Emergence of Koorqosan: The lost world of Koorqosan, brought to Compliance a hundred years previously and then enveloped by the Warp, reappears upon the immaterial waves of the Messier 16 Nebula. The world appears to have experienced the accelerated passage of time in reverse, providing a glimpse at the secrets of Mankind's earliest exploration of the stars.

939.M30
The Mystery of Novo Andruss: A force identifying as the '*Ghost Legion*' appears unheralded on the rebellious world of Novo Andruss. Uncharted psychic phenomenon are unleashed and then quelled in a brief but bloody conflict which brings the world back into Compliance, though superstition is heightened amongst the populace as a result.

943.M30
The Melkeji Salvation: The Imperium encounters a civilisation subjugated by a parasitic alien race which feasts on human sentience. Breaking the strongholds of the parasite hosts, recorded as the Ascended, the Word Bearers Legion bring Melkeji to Compliance.

954.M30
The Screaming World: The Ultramarines are drawn to the world of Volturn, thought to be Compliant, by the petitioning of their Librarians, who claim to hear inhuman screaming emanating from its location. Upon investigation, the world is found to be infested by ill-definable xenos creatures. Volturn is quarantined and abandoned after all members of the landing party suffer spontaneous and fatal cerebral aneurysms within minutes of setting foot upon the damned, screaming world.

962.M30
The Defence of Helioret: The insane Witch-Idol of the Eldar Craftworld of Magc'Sithraal leads a brutal campaign of raids against Helioret, perpetrating etheric outrages across the sector. The combined forces of the Blood Angels and the Ordo Sinister bring down the Witch-Idol and cast the Craftworld into the local star.

963.M30
The Razing of Monarchia: The perfect city of Monarchia on Khur, nurtured by the Word Bearers Legion, openly promotes the worship of the Emperor as a god. The Ultramarines are dispatched to destroy the city and humble the Word Bearers for promulgating doctrines contrary to the Imperial Truth.

977.M30
The Compliance of Dwell: Brought into Compliance peacefully by the Ultramarines, the world of Dwell is found to harbour an esoteric network of technologies of potentially xenos origin which predate the Age of Strife. This network is found to preserve and combine the memories and knowledge of Dwell's people upon death through ill-understood means.

987.M30
The Compliance of Indra-sûl: On Indra-sûl, the Raven Guard infiltrate the home of the monstrous xenos Khrave and wage a guerrilla campaign to defeat the gluttonous, warped creatures within, in their efforts to liberate the human population the Khrave dominate. The Khrave and their edifice are cast down, freeing Indra-sûl.

988.M30
The Mariposa Campaign: A pocket of space comprising 12 subsectors is released from a warp storm which had raged from the time of the Age of Strife. For three years, the Blood Angels, Imperial Fists, Imperial Army and Sisters of Silence battle against hordes of Warp-twisted cults of the mutant and the psyker, bringing 34 worlds into Compliance.

000.M31
According to the *Unbalanced Scales*, this marks the beginning of the Alpha Legion's compact with a faction of the Outsider.

001.M31
The Council of Nikaea: The Emperor decrees the use of psykers within the Space Marine Legions prohibited. Viewing the gathering at Nikaea as his personal trial, Magnus the Red retreats to Prospero admonished.

The Whisperhead Mountains: At the town of Katheri on Sixty-Three Nineteen, local superstition speaks of a recurring entity or holy phenomenon known as Samus. The Luna Wolves destroy all traces of religion in the region and bring the world to Compliance.

003.M31
The First War of Xenobia: During the Imperium's feud with the Interex, a highly advanced human society allied with several xenos species, the full panoply of Warp-based technologies available to their alien vassals among the Kinebrach are unleashed, creating localised warp storms, diseases capable of felling Space Marines in minutes and other inexplicable esoterica.

004.M31
The Serpent Lodge: When Horus falls, wounded on the moon of Davin, his Legion receives aid from an order of Davinite healers and priests. Fearing the influence of the occult on their master, the newly named Sons of Horus fall into schism over the morality of this course of action. It is now rumoured that this is the event which led to the XVIth Legion being riven and that the Primarch which entered the Serpent Lodge was not the same as the one to leave it.

The Burning of Prospero: Following crimes against the Edict of Nikaea, Leman Russ is sent at the head of a great censure host to bring Magnus the Red back to Terra in chains. The Thousand Sons refuse to surrender, and their world and works are brought to ruin in a cataclysmic battle which rents the very stuff of space and time.

005.M31 [UNCORROBORATED]
The Battle of Signus Prime: The Blood Angels are entrapped in the Signus system whereupon they encounter Horus' ruinous allies of the Warp. Reality bends and the fabric of the universe is torn open by the powers unleashed by the Warmaster. The IXth Legion pays a heavy price to free itself of Horus' noose.

006.M31
The Battle for the Choral City: On Isstvan III, the ancient magicks of the Sirenhold are unleashed against the forces of the Sons of Horus, Emperor's Children, Death Guard and World Eaters. The battle is won in vain as the Warmaster reveals his treachery by unleashing the life-eater virus against his own sons and allies in the ultimate act of betrayal.

007.M31
The Birth of the Ruinstorm: During the Battle of Calth, the Word Bearers Legion enact a ritual which brings death to the Jewel of Ultramar and its local star. The Ruinstorm is unleashed, a truly vast warp storm which inhibits space travel and communication across the floundering Imperium, paving the way for Horus' advance.

The Chondax Engagement: The Alpha Legion, supposedly driven by the commands of both the Warmaster and the Outsider, openly engage the White Scars in the Chondax system after years of shadowed ambushes. Their exact purpose is unclear, it would seem, according to the *Unbalanced Scales*, even to the XXth Legion itself.

008.M31
The Torture of Nuceria: At the climax of the Battle of Nuceria during the conclusion of the Shadow Crusade, whilst in combat with Roboute Guilliman Angron reaches a nadir of pain, bitterness and rage which forms a conduit between him and the Warp. Guilliman is forced to withdraw as his brother is ravaged by Empyreal energies.

009.M31
The Final Death of Iydris: On the Eldar Crone World of Iydris, in the heart of the Eye of Terror, Fulgrim betrays his brother Perturabo, leaving both Primarchs changed forever. The manner of this betrayal is unclear but the act releases vast amounts of energy, forming a black hole singularity.

Battle of Perditus: The Death Guard, led by First Captain Typhon, are engaged by Iron Hands survivors of Isstvan V. They battle to a standstill over 38 days on the Mechanicum station of Perditus. The matter is eventually resolved by the arrival of an overwhelming Dark Angels fleet led by Lion El'Jonson, who takes Perditus under his own protection and demands the retreat of both the Iron Tenth and the XIVth Legion.

The Beacon of Sotha: An aetheric light thought to be created by unidentified psyarkana bursts across the skies above the world of Sotha. This beacon serves to illuminate the realm of Ultramar, providing a point of navigation for vessels trapped beyond the Ruinstorm.

010.M31
The Drussen Atrocity: Rumours of the presence of a forbidden Empyreal engine draws the attention of splinter elements of both Traitor and Loyalist forces, leading to a brief war which ravages the isolated world of Drussen, the apocalyptic conflict halving the world's population in a single night.

011.M31
The Marches of Madness: The World Eaters make seemingly senseless raids on population centres across the Ultima Segmentum. Their brutal attacks are aimed at causing maximum human casualties, ignoring both infrastructure and military targets, and are accompanied by unseasonal violent storms and unnatural crimson cloud bursts.

A Denial of the Supernatural

The following is an excerpt of the essay 'Truth in all His Works', the Magnum Opus of the rationalist Terran philosophist, Alasteir Gundi. As one of the first scholars of the Imperial Truth, Gundi was an early contributor to its ideals.

'As an aside from this work on the merits of a single creed of Truth, I wish to discredit a popular theory as the foolishness it is. You see, I scoff at the primitive notion of demons! I attribute the stories of beings of darkness and purest, blackest evil to little more than the overblown fear mongering creations of the tyrants of Old Earth, dreamed up to keep the basest chattel of Mankind suppressed in servitude. The preaching of false prophets, the soothsaying of viziers and the curses of old hags are but the comical and dramatic methods for the feeble to appear strong and for the worthless to garner undeserved respect. The trinkets and charms peddled to keep such spirits at bay are little more than the mercantile exploitations of salesmen of serpents' oils. All of this, an economy of nonsense, is an exercise in obtaining and maintaining control over the weak-minded.

What of the tales of the gods, and their miracles and retributions? At best, these are simply coincidence attributed to divinity, unexpected hope or despair laid at the feet of certain menacing yet unextraordinary events. At worst, they are the herd behaviours of group hysteria and mass hallucination, or the spreading symptoms of mental infirmities caused by the radiological legacy of Terra. The words and deeds of such so-called gods as 'Magrese', 'Abundance', 'Dagriel', 'Khurnatan' and the 'Contagious King' are patent works of fiction, imagined from the minds of madmen. Nor can they be made to appear from thin air with babbling incantation, or the scribbled daubing of childlike symbols. Their names hold no power over us, for we are to be a galactic empire of Mankind unified by our enlightenment!

Claims that these illogical beings mean us grave harm and reside in the turmoil of the Warp too are falsehoods. The Empyrean is a necessary conduit for space travel and is simply another dimension yet to be fully charted, as like any other area of space. This galaxy is Mankind's birthright. The Warp falls within our domain and we shall master it also. Just as the seafarers of Old Earth once baulked at the depths and the gas divers of Jupiter avoided the hot jets of the Jovian zones, Mankind has, and will again, overcome its irrational, Immaterial fears.

We learn more of the xenos forms of the Empyrean with every voyage. They may appear to be drawn towards us, but are simply like shoals of harmless oceanic creatures, attracted by the blinking lights along the keels of our vessels. As in any ecosystem, there too are predators to be wary of, but these are simple star-spawn hunting the shoals, and harbour no malicious intent towards us.

I understand that sailors can be a superstitious lot, and so I must re-iterate: there are no demons in the Warp! This is one of the many reasons why the Imperial Truth is so critical to breaking the fear human minds experience when faced with the vastness of the Cosmos. Without it, we could never leave the light of Sol.'

Daemonology

Stories which explore the supernatural nature of the Warp cannot be interpreted literally, for no rational mind could contain the true and eternally-changing knowledge of unreality. When discussing such tales, we must consider them to be allegorical, filled with the metaphors of simpler understanding which reveal the greater truth. Such was explained by the poet Dominicus the Mad, whose work was considered to be entirely a fantasy of the insane until recent events revealed it to hold a kernel of truth. Herein follows an exploration of the adapted ideas of Dominicus and other scholars, poets and preachers who have been ridiculed and persecuted over the long millennia, whose unreal works on the ethereal have been vindicated by reality.

Within every man, woman and child resides a soul. Such a statement is a heresy against the Imperial Truth, but is known to be true. The nature of the soul has been the debate of scholars for millennia. It is believed that from this soul our thoughts, feelings and inspirations come; that the soul is the very root of sentience. The souls of Mankind are flickering beacons in the Immaterium, and like moths to a flame they draw the attentions of the aethertropic organisms which exist in the Warp. These harmless shades are pulled to us by the echoes of human emotions in the void. The brightest souls, those of psykers, accumulate around them swarms of these flitting creatures and, drawn by those fluttering swarms of shadows, the bat-winged predators of darkest night come to feast.

The oldest bargains of Mankind involved the trading of souls. The exchange, often in the form of a sacrifice, was intended to earn the favourable intervention of the gods. Tribal peoples of Old Earth sacrificed animals to deities, believing that their lives, too, imparted some measure of the essence which their deities desired. This may be true, though it is now believed that it is the act of worship inherent to such a gesture that aligns a soul to the sentience within the Warp. Those in more dire need, or who greedily desired greater power, sacrificed their fellow men, hoping to attain richer boons from the gods, and though they knew it not, their prayers were directed to the supernatural entities of the Warp. These creatures are capricious, however, and only serve the purposes of Mankind for their own gain, the worshipping of believers often going unrewarded, to the amusement of dark powers. The vile kingdoms of the foulest hungering powers within the Warp, those sometimes called the gods of Chaos, are built upon the ethereal strength of the souls they hold sway over. In the Empyrean, the soul is the only unit of value, constituting both power and sustenance. For this reason, the Warp can also be known as the Sea of Souls.

Through our ancestors' successful sacrifices and the prayers of early religions, some creatures of the Warp, those with the most predatory intelligence, aligned themselves to the fates of Mankind and the other sentient species of the galaxy. The sacrifices of the religious, be it through ritual, warfare or murder came to nourish these entities and transfer a measure of sentience to them, teaching them to draw ever closer to the bright flicker of the souls of Mankind. So attuned, the ripples of our every strong emotion in the Warp, be it fear, fury, lust or grief, became a morsel for these entities. So too have our emotions and desires – be they light or dark – that we as a species have projected into the aether for millennia, shaped the aspect and demeanour of these entities. And as they drew close, we came to know them, and we attributed them a name common to the fears of many of Mankind's ancient faiths: Daemon.

The Theology of the Damned

Those amongst the learned know that there is little clear distinction between the real and unreal – they are a continuum with but a thin veil drawn between them. Those keen enough to realise this truth have, throughout Mankind's history, been labelled deranged and been cloistered in asylums. One such person was Empyreal scholar Alana Sellius. Found among her papers is conjecture gathered from her research into the tales of voyagers of the Warp. These papers, which are assumed responsible for Sellius' insanity, attribute every emotion a certain flavour, and state that Daemons come to prefer some tastes over others. The more extreme the emotion, the more pressing the hunger of the Daemon: rage more piquant than mere anger, and unbridled lust a more tender morsel than simple desire. Though at the time of her writing these were dismissed as the delusions of a broken mind, she goes on to explain that as Daemons align around these common emotions, they take on the characteristics of their favoured palate. As they gather and amalgamate, their shared essence and combined power is what we might consider the realms and gods within the Warp. This analogy is useful when considering, through the lens of various cultures, why the notion that the power of gods and their realms are shifting and in constant struggle and competition with one another over the souls of Mankind.

Her writings go on to expound that the so-called gods, or ruinous powers, are actually amoral in their truest form; they are acts of nature, likened as to the storms of inclement weather which gather in Terra's troposphere. These sentient storms harbour no malignant intent, but travel freely upon invisible currents of psychic force. Occasionally, these pressure waves collide, manifesting a Daemon as if from a bolt of lightning, and although such a creature is highly dangerous, its actions are random and are not in themselves motivated by malice. Sellius claims that Daemons do not harbour ill-intent, but can be directed to do harm in the same manner as lightning can be caged and then called forth from a weapon to destroy.

Her radical theology argues that, because these similarities are shared throughout so many cults and religions which were encountered during the Great Crusade, it lends them credence. The concept of an afterlife too is a galactic constant, though, as per Sellius' notes, a soul simply drifts in the Warp after death until a passing Daemon takes a liking to its essence and devours it. It would appear that all of these practices of worship point to the evocation of the same deities, and of a unified spiritual understanding common to all of humanity. With religion, we may have been able to reconcile the horrific occurrences experienced in Warp travel because of the soothing teachings of faith. Therefore, she argues, religion itself may have played a pivotal role in the development of Mankind as a species capable of braving the cosmos, providing us with a common goal: to unite and collaborate in a journey (or even a '*pilgrimage*', the apocryphal term favoured by Sellius), to meet the gods in their domain among the stars. She further posits that religion may have had the benefit of simplifying matters, of giving humanity a balm with which to soothe the madness of the knowledge that Daemons exist. If such holds true then the conclusion to be drawn from such theology is that we are as a species more vulnerable to the predations of Daemons due to the atheism of our Truth.

Manifestations and Incursions

Daemons take many forms, as we know from the accounts of travellers of the Warp, and the survivors of the Age of Darkness. In the immaterial realm they are amorphous and ever-changing. When they manifest

in corporeal reality, Daemons absorb material around them to display shapes which invariably cause revulsion and fear in those who behold them. These forms are categorised as their '*Daemonic Emanations*', and are not limited to what the human mind can imagine. Indeed, the human eye may be an inadequately crude instrument with which to behold such abominable creatures, and survivors of minor Daemonic incursions have spoken less of the visual appearance of the Daemon than of their pervasive, putrid, rotting-meat stench and the feeling of cold dread they inspire. Much like their aspect, their motion too is unnatural and does not scan by the laws of physical movement we would naturally expect a living creature to uphold; jerking between flickering bursts of speed and glacial sloth.

For indeterminate reasons, the Emanations commonly take the form of bestial limbs and crude ancient human weaponry, or else mimic the immediate horrors of the environment into which they are born, fusing their nascent corposant with both inanimate matter and flesh in hideous ways. It seems also that Daemons appear to swell in size with the glut of energy they contain as they leave the Warp, able to appear as vast, hab-sized behemoths of twisted flesh or brutish hulks of writhing ectoplasm that can smash aside a Predator tank, though it is impossible to ascertain if their size implies any form of hierarchy or is simply a coincidence of the conditions of their manifestation. It is believed also by the insane that Daemons take on altering aspects depending on their place in some vast pantheon or some tiered dominion within the Warp, though this is beyond the knowing of any sane human mind. Those practiced in the arcane, however, do suggest that it may be possible to influence or manipulate the form in which a Daemon may manifest, through rituals of an entirely esoteric nature.

There have been psykers since humanity's earliest days, and as the incidence of the psychic mutation has grown over the millennia, so too has grown the incidences of Daemonic incursions. There are many ways in which Daemons can breach the borders of reality to become tangible, manifest horrors. Indeed, Mankind's first material contact with Daemons may have been entirely accidental. The use of psychic power pulls energy from the Warp and can draw a Daemon with it unintentionally. The more unrestrained the psyker, as we often see in the untrained psykers hunted by the Sisters of Silence, the greater the pull on the other side. Daemons are drawn towards the flaring brightness of a soul in the Empyrean, and in their hunger they clamour to push through into our world and devour that soul and all others.

Daemons can also be manifested by those desirous of their power through an arcane rite of summoning. Mankind has, through morbid curiosity, been drawn to the substance of the Warp and the allure of its power since time immemorial. Over the ages, Mankind's sorcerers learned and refined their knowledge until, in hubris, they thought to control the powers of the Warp, unleashing the horrors of Old Night. The stories from this time, preserved by the Sigillite's historical arcanists, speak of the many methods of summoning and subjugating Daemons as slaves of darkness to undertake the bidding of their arcane masters. Invariably, these tales end in disaster. What we can glean from them however is that summoned Daemons are inherently weaker than their kin in the Warp, for their power is derived from the quality and quantity of sacrifices made in trade for their manifestation. These summoned Daemons are then subdued, either through etheric rites or a focussing relic such as an arcane cornerstone. They may also be implanted into a person, pushing out the soul (or offering it to be consumed) to be replaced by the Daemon, in a form of summoning known as possession. This is considered to be relatively safer, as the destruction of the vessel would banish the Daemon within. Additional sacrifices and rituals of binding are required to stop the Daemon from rebelling and escaping back into the Warp, and these too weaken it.

It was once believed that a Daemon must be summoned through ritual and incantation, even accidental incursions being caused by an untrained psyker stumbling upon some spell, and that the Daemon has no agency of its own; the very act of summoning causing its creation, allowing it to exist only for a short time before withering into the ether. In Ultramar, the Word Bearers performed the ritual of the Ruinstorm which dispelled that belief. This ritual gathered exceptional power through the sacrifice of millions of souls and the promise of billions more over the course of the Horus Heresy, and indeed in some symbolic fashion the sacrifice of the unrealised potential of the ambitions of Ultramar. With it, the Diabolists of the XVIIth Legion sought, by creating a great warp storm, to confound Loyalist reprisals. Whether by accident or design, they also eroded the border of reality until it was gossamer thin. Able to push through this thinned veil of their own accord, Daemons in all of their unadulterated horror were able to manifest en-masse. These '*Ruinstorm*' Daemons were not constrained by the bindings of sorcery, ritual or sacrificial power. They were not at all safe, controllable or predictable. These were the untamed malice of the Warp unleashed on an unprepared galaxy.

Appearing from tears in realspace, drawn of their own volition by the promise of souls on which to feast, the Daemons of the Ruinstorm brought untold ruin upon the worlds of the Imperium. These mass manifestations, or incursions as they became known, appeared with little warning, although sometimes were heralded by a surge in the tides of the Warp, sensed only by psykers, who are a mistrusted breed at the best of times. No two recorded incursions are alike, though many share common expressions of esoteric phenomenon; such as the darkening of midday skies, the barking of hounds, and fires burning more fiercely and in flames of unnatural colours. Incursions could be accompanied by howling winds carrying screaming voices, anguished faces appearing in clouds of dust, raging floods and sudden, catastrophic tectonic activity. Daemons could appear as if from thin air, fall from space in their hundreds or march out from the maddening glow of portals to the unfiltered Warp.

The Daemons of the Ruinstorm are beings of unrestrained predacity, which recall our ancestral memories of the caves on Old Earth where we helplessly cowered in fear from antediluvian megafauna. It is believed that for every moment they are removed from the Warp, these Daemons weaken, though they may sustain themselves by absorbing into their matter the souls of those whom they kill. Daemons appearing from the Ruinstorm were witnessed to fall upon the citizens of the Imperium with wild ferocity, tearing open their bodies and feasting on their essence, causing terror and inflicting destruction until such a time as they could no longer remain cohesive in our reality; fading back into the Warp. The Daemons of the Ruinstorm are the very horrors of unplumbed space, they are the avatars of the Primordial Annihilator, and to speak openly and frequently of them courts madness.

They have always been with us. From the First Birth to the First Murder. They are the phantasmagorical essence of our forefathers returned and unrestful. They are us, ourselves returned in afterlife, from a land in which all time and space stands still and is one, and all that will be has come to pass. The apparitions have always been close to the veil. They are the dark mirror. They are found in the faces glimpsed in linens crumpled over a chair, the man half-seen at the window and the shadow shifting upon the bedchamber ceiling when sleep is no ally. The swine aspect is the only true manifestation, rictus with evil. Beware him!

They Laugh Beyond The Curtain

In Evocation with the appropriate rites a person may call upon the form of any of their ancestors, even though their body be rotted or cremated. The insubstantial form which returns is that of the undevoured soul, torn from beyond, reformed, inchoate of the dust of creation. Heed them.

In Invocation we seek control. The wraiths take no pleasure from coming into our world; it is painful to them. The horrors they wreak are simply their coping with the torment of flesh-birth. They are vulnerable for a moment, predatory wolves in the wool of domiciled lambs. Bind them or suffer.

In Confluence they arrive with rituals so adroit they can only crudely be called of the Artes. Invite them from the othere-side by consuming the fleisch of man. This is the wild and true essence. These spectres contain the savageness of Mankind, though they are Solifugae and flee from the Sun. Free them and Fear them.

Follow the Rites - do not replicate them frivolously. A dozen souls must be given and a piece of the scribe is lost, such is the cost. All begin with the sacrificial offering of [redacted]

They Thirst Beyond The Curtain

Do not speak the names of the Gods. To do so draws peril. To write the names enwraps the soul with their oily tendrils of smoke. There is only one flame, that of the inferno of hell. We are all logs failing to burn; some few will become embers, but most are the inconsequence of sodden wood, made meat. All of the soul's delights are their feast. The Master will consume us all. Verzehre das fleisch, trinke das fleisch werde zum fleisch. The galaxy is full of sparks that will never catch. The Godhead with no soul will drain the brightest of them to burn fiercest.

When the godless soul rises, life will boil as the oceans did. The ground will quake and worlds will become molten. The dead will tear from the void to the ecstatic shiver of the galaxy. The Earth will be of brimstone and rivers will be forged from flame. There will be disaster of cosmic proportion. We herald the years of darkness. The Gods will be found in the centre of the galaxy. They are the Sentient Storms. They ride on the Winds of Fear.

They Sing Beyond The Curtain

YOU MUST NOT SPEAK THEIR NAMES! It is writ thusly in The Necrotech of hell and the abyss that they are part of the warp'd realm et data est illi potestas [illegible] indlala, isibetho, kunye [illegible]

A Study of Diabolical Texts

Herein is a curious rambling excerpt from the Peregrinatio In Haemataugy Sanctae, a proscribed incunabula of ancient provenance and a work of great interest to the Sigillite's historical arcanists. This rare edition, which was recovered from the libraries of the half-mad genius Narthan Dume, incorporates the lost work The Daemonologiesa.

The Galactic Occult

Occultism was rife in the galaxy at the onset of the Great Crusade. Caused by the long darkness of the Age of Strife and millennia of isolation, human progress stagnated, leading to the regression of its peoples to ancient practices. Many cults lurked just under the civilised veneer of functioning societies, while others, particularly those religions driven by charismatic figures, rose to prominence; their dogma filling the minds of their subjects and drawing closer the warp storms of that Age. The Great Crusade bought illumination to the darkest corners of the galaxy, where the Expeditionary fleets encountered and eradicated many cults. As enlightenment was brought to the reunited worlds of the Imperium, the Imperial Truth was employed to wrest the far flung cultures of Mankind – some more cryptic and steeped in the arcane than others – from the control of the occult.

However, with thousands of worlds brought into the light of the Imperial Truth in a matter of two short centuries, it was impossible to utterly eradicate the activities of the spiritual and the occult from every world. On many worlds, the sudden removal of paradigms of belief which had stood for millennia left populations devoid of purpose rather than empowered by the Truth, and vulnerable to the charisma of demagogues or to the insinuations of xenos breeds. On many others, long-held beliefs were simply suppressed, relegated to hidden corners where they would become more extreme, re-emerging a generation later. Moreover, even as the Great Crusade excised the beliefs of spirits and gods, it brought with it its own traditions and those of the hundreds of cultures whose peoples it had subsumed into its armed forces, sometimes resulting in replacing one faith with another, and the unintended mixing of occult practices that were contrary in nature to the Imperial Truth.

Many thousands of such religions and cults were met, combatted and extinguished by the tide of the Great Crusade. Though their practices of worship and the beliefs of their faiths took myriad forms, they ultimately served the purpose of either the Daemon or the Outsider. Contained herein is a selection of examples of cult activity as encountered by the forces of the Imperial Army, to better demonstrate the diversity and peculiarity of the occult.

Seekers of the Forbidden

During the Great Crusade, it was primarily the warriors of the Thousand Sons and the Word Bearers Legions who were chosen to quell the threats of the occult and the arcane. Looking at the pattern dictated by history, it appears they were frequently found to be adjacent to areas of such need. Knowing what we now know, it is suspiciously fortuitous that they should have made themselves available for so many similarly aligned actions of Compliance, a trend which was only exacerbated by their reuniting with their Primarchs, although of course this was part of the Emperor's template for these two Legions. Certainly, there were inherent dangers in prolonged exposure to the darkest aspects of humanity among the stars and in allowing these two Legions to accumulate occult knowledge, the taint of which may have contributed to their eventual downfall.

The Thousand Sons in particular seem to have experienced combat against a disproportionate number of suspected '*sorcerous*' threats and almost without exception made haste to undertake conquests of worlds known to contain libraries, crypts and other repositories of arcane tomes. Though part of their role was, nominally, to safely dispose of such grimoires, it was an open secret that they cloistered these

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The Baksuryan Orders

Elucidators of the Office of the Sigillite in the process of purging the city of Thelmpacia of a group of cannibals and Warp-worshippers recovered an unexpected item in their possession: the intact helmet of a Thousand Sons Legionary. Concealed within its lining was a scrawled parchment, assumed to have been written by its erstwhile owner, recalling in summary the findings of an investigation into the organisation. According to the handwritten notes, which remain uncorroborated due to the thorough punitive efforts of the Elucidators, Thelmpacia had fallen under the thrall of an ancient faith. Calling themselves the Devourers, the members of this group worshipped an entity called Haksujan, a '*holy being*' renowned for its insatiable appetites. Haksujan, according to local myths, judged its servants by their martial strength, its worshippers meeting in secret to undertake ritual melees. The leaders of the Order were the most accomplished pugilists in these brawls, their might and martial prowess being their criteria of selection, and their strength only appeared to grow with the favour of their brethren and their deity. If the combat resulted in a death, as it should per the tradition of the Order, all of the fighters present would partake in eating the corpse of the fallen, emulating the appetites of their unearthly master.

Parallels were drawn on the recovered parchment between the behaviour of the Devourers and dozens of other incidents of occult activities throughout the galaxy, tracing back to pre-Unification Terra. Apparently well-versed in the occult, the author of the note linked the ritual practices of the Devourers with the Brotherhood of Godann on Beta Hethacon, and with the Children of Jumnuka on Rothberg VI. The author goes on to theorise that all such organisations descend from that of the Order of Baksurya the Hungerer, a faction encountered by the Emperor on the sub-Indus archipelagos of Ancient Terra. Though ostensibly eliminated by the forces of Unification, their beliefs remained subtly present in His domains and were carried across the stars by His armies. This is substantiated, claims the scrawled text, by the fact that all worlds touched by the outbreak of similar groups were brought to Compliance by the 73rd Expeditionary Fleet, which carried warriors from that region of Terra. Though purged one by one, similar groups have appeared in other areas of the galaxy and are thought to have been propagated by soldiers of the Great Crusade, who in the field may have witnessed and then imitated their saviours amongst certain Legions of the Space Marines partaking in a limited form of anthropophagy.

When eventually returned to the XVth Legion, the helmet was identified as that of Mykolayiv Bast, Fated Vigilator of the Thousand Sons Ammitara Occult, who was declared missing in 890.M30. Bast's helmet was re-powered by the armourers of his Legion and extensive audio dictation was discovered in its data-core, detailing the findings of his investigation into the Haksujan Order and presumably other such groups. The Thousand Sons deemed this report to be too dangerously arcane to share with the officers of the Sigillite, and accordingly claimed to have destroyed the helmet and its contents. Though multiple petitions were filed, the XVth Legion would not explain the reason behind Bast's concealed presence in Thelmpacia, or the extent of his investigations.

relics of humanity's forgotten knowledge within their own libraries in Tizca. Some among the Primarchs are also said to have grown resentful of Magnus' pursuits in the realms of proscribed knowledge, and of his Legion's propensity to disrupt the course of conquests in their desire to attain it. This became a recurring source of friction, notably so when Magnus reportedly almost came to blows with his brother Russ in the Ark Reach Cluster and again when Corax chastised the Thousand Sons Legion for interfering in the Riohbia Campaign.

History shows us that the lore and esoterica which Magnus the Red and Lorgar Aurelian claimed during the Great Crusade would grow to be their most potent weapon. In retrospect it seems obvious that to these two Primarchs the Great Crusade came to be more a wondrous expedition into the accumulated religions, occultism and arcana of Mankind than a war for conquest.

Given what we know now, it appears unwise that our primary response to threatening phenomena which we scarcely understood, was to employ the Word Bearers and Thousand Sons Legions to contain it, for though they may have destroyed the cultures responsible for arcane evils, they also took the knowledge of those people by looting the ruins of their cities, ransacking their libraries, picking clean their sacred shrines and exhuming the secrets of their burial sites. The Crimson King and the Aurelian were seeking forbidden knowledge from the very beginning. Though it is assumed that at least originally their intent was not malicious, the blame lies at our own door for not intervening; for not expounding to them the supernatural nature of that which they would come to consort with, and for not warning them of the damnation which would surely follow.

Had we but seen the signs that these noble Legions were acting with ulterior agendas at the end, we may have been able to influence the directions they took. And when He had the chance, could not the Emperor have acted more compassionately to correct the transgressions of His wayward sons than to incite the bitter humiliations of Monarchia and Nikaea? Perhaps had it been so, these Legions, which were so learned in the arcane and charged with the passion for a greater calling, could have raised the Imperium up with the power of their wisdom. Tragically, the seeds laid by the Primarchs of the XVth and XVIIth Legions would instead come to terrible fruition.

Carven of Cethlen

On the inner edge of the region known as the Halo Stars, the world of Cethlen was discovered by the Imperium. A temperate world whose topography was that of grass plains dotted with lakes and towering structures of free standing mesa landforms, Cethlen was ideal for supporting human life. Sparsely populated by a nomadic civilisation with a reverence of nature, its tribes equivalent in technological development to the Bronze Age societies of Ancient Terra, their sect was one of ancestor veneration, raising cairns and standing stone circles to their gods, and was dismissed by Imperial authorities as harmless, and a matter for the Iterators to deal with in time. As a result, Cethlen was quickly and peaceably brought into the Imperium in 801.M30. The tribes of Cethlen appeared simple and struggled to communicate with the Imperial delegation throughout the transition, appearing to care little for the promise of enlightenment and Imperial technology. Scattered as they were, the tribes could make little protest and were largely ignored as the Imperium claimed Cethlen and the priesthood of Mars began the instalment of infrastructure and industry on their world.

Two decades after Compliance, an Imperial flotilla of the Administratum, consisting of bureaucrats and Imperial historians tasked with recording the progress of Compliant worlds, was escorted to Cethlen by the 88th Company of the War Hounds. Upon arriving at Cethlen they observed from orbit the works and technologies of the Imperium littered across the landscape, now little more than scattered ruins. The War Hounds deployed on Cethlen to investigate the Imperial losses and found the bones of Imperial personnel stacked against grassland cairns and standing stones. Assuming perfidy on the part of the tribesmen, the War Hounds hunted down several nomadic groups through the grasslands in formations of Land's Proteus Speeders and Scimitar jetbikes, putting them to the sword though they offered no resistance and appeared to be no threat. Several such groups were found within the bounds of great stone circles, chanting and worshipping at the bases of the towering mesas of rock. Though they were being slaughtered, the Cethlenese only began to show fear and started to flee for their lives when the War Hounds began to topple the standing stone blocks. No sooner had the first block hit the ground, it is reported that through unseen means the giant, eroded mesas shifted from the earth, extending to rise on thick roots, as of trees. Like leviathans from the earth, these towering entities of rock summoned spars of stone from the ground, smashing the attacking Legionaries to pulp.

Across Cethlen, the colossal beings, which came to be known as Carven, rose up as the nomadic tribes which tended to them died. Supposedly, as per Celthenese myth, the Carven could be placated by worship; a fact the early settlers of Cethlen had learned at great cost, forcing them to become a nomadic society of earthquake chasers. They were also kept dormant due to the raising of their young by the Cethlenese tribes – blocks of sandstone-like alien flesh which would grow and harden as they were ritually tended to. Carven, which had existed on Cethlen long before Mankind had settled there, seemed to display a simple, subtle intelligence, acting peacefully to the kinship of nature displayed by the tribes' people while responding with violence to Imperium industry and technology.

The XIIth Legion, uncaring of the history of the Celthenese, set about breaking every stone on the planet after discovering the presence of the Carven, from the smallest pebble to the largest mountain. Their skimmers scouted ahead to locate boulder fields and standing circles, Land Raider tanks following in their wake to crush potential creatures under their treads. Against the more mature, gigantic Carven they deployed their complement of field artillery, Rapier teams and Basilisks to shatter rock from afar. When felled, Legionaries on foot chopped at the roots of these living mountains with axes and crumbled rock under the hammering, explosive displacer field impacts of power mauls until only dust and dark mud remained. Even so, the very bedrock of Celthen was deemed untrustworthy, being potentially seeded by the Carven. The planet was interdicted therefore by the War Hounds, who continued to observe it for suspicious tectonic activity until permission was granted by Imperium High Command in 824.M30 for the XIIth Legion to destroy the entire world with cyclonic missiles.

Coven of the Resurrectionists

On the distant eastern edge of the Ghoul Stars, an esoteric faith with practices previously unheard of was encountered by the pathfinders of the Imperium. Dubbed the Resurrectionists, the cult had taken root on Damire, and from there it had spread among the small human sub-light empire which had colonised the six worlds of the same system. The Resurrectionists' faith was overseen by a clan of grinning leaders who were known as the Coven, grey-bearded and black-cloaked men whose spryness belied their apparent years. The Coven of the Resurrectionists held sway over the ruling classes of the Damirite Empire and were widely held to be a positive force by its people, though a subtle sense of cultural stagnation appeared to have come into being under the influence of the cult, as was observed by the second and third Imperial delegations which arrived in the sub-sector.

Three times in the space of as many decades, the Imperium had come to the Damirite Empire with the news of Terra and the Emperor. Three times the world of Damire had accepted them, responding enthusiastically to the promise of new knowledge and technology, taking to the introduction of STC infrastructure with fervant interest. On each occasion the denizens of Damire rose up shortly thereafter and, led by their grinning Coven, overthrown the Imperium's representatives. Retribution came to Damire, and three times their empire had been razed and its people slaughtered. As had happened three times before, Imperial scouts once again intercepted short range communications within the neighbouring Thramas sector, and once again they returned to Damire to find a pristine empire, enjoying its isolation and unblemished by Imperium influence.

A platoon of the Thousand Sons Legion joined the fourth Imperial delegation to reach Damire. There, once again, the denizens of Damire seemed genuinely surprised to meet the new arrivals, as if having never seen people from the stars before. Thinking they had fallen off-course and encountered an undiscovered similar world, the representatives of the Imperium were ready to mark its position for future Compliance and move on, if not for the intervention of Centurion Edrokar Lisk of the Thousand Sons who, identifying the presence of the occult behind the riddle of Damire, insisted that the Damirite Empire be abolished immediately and permanently.

After the fourth instance of Damire being razed, Lisk and his command remained on the once again ruined world. Within weeks, vast crescent shaped slashes in reality appeared across Damire, apparently cut open from some other realm. From these tears in realspace emerged the empire of Damire once more, just as it had been, millions of souls, cities, forests and lakes and more appearing on their world anew. With them came the still grinning members of the Coven, carrying their curved ceremonial blades. With these weapons, the Coven sliced more wounds in reality from which the world of Damire was restored, before retreating through the final cut together. As the tear in reality began to close, the Thousand Sons Legionaries followed the Coven through the breach in space and time.

Within the realspace tear, Lisk and his unit found themselves in a dense and beautiful forest filled with life. As they followed the Coven, day turned to night and the seasons changed with every step until all blurred together; being always both day and night, summer and winter. They reportedly witnessed birth, death and decay at an accelerated rate, though all life seemed unworried by mortality and unblemished by decay, appearing refreshed again, though subtly altered by the cycle. Lisk would later reflect that he was filled with an unfettered sense of joy to have found an elusive realm in which there was no despair, no war, and all life was eternal and perpetual. He would name this realm the Vadanglow, though through study of Imperial records from the first Damire encounter it can be inferred that the Resurrectionists referred to it as the Grin. Emerging from the Grin through another half-moon slash in reality, the Legionaries found themselves to be in a city of one of the other worlds of the Damirite Empire, already in an advanced state of repair.

Here the Thousand Sons, suddenly bereft of the joy they had felt, and embittered that even their highly regulated emotions were so easily manipulated by the influence of the other realm, attempted to break the perpetuating cycle of resurrection. They hunted the Coven of the Resurrectionists through the streets, mercilessly gunning them down. Many escaped into the Grin, or tumbled dying into it only to rise again, closing the portals behind them. Taking up the blades of fallen cultists, the Thousand Sons cut their own passages into the ethereal forest beyond. Within, they cut down the last grinning madmen, but at the moment of their death they burst into life anew and continued to flee; cutting paths to other worlds in order to escape, though this left them vulnerable to a mortal death at the hands of the Space Marines in pursuit.

While the Thousand Sons were attempting to bodily subdue the Coven and capture its weapons, several of the Coven lashed out with their subtle blades, cutting the Space Marines in many dimensions, extinguishing their lives with a shocking finality which the Grin could not restore. In a rage of retaliation, some few of the Thousand Sons warriors dipped into their psychic power, destroying fleeing Resurrectionists with etheric lightning. This was a mistake, however, for the force of the Warp was hidden behind the glamour of the Grin, and poured directly into the Space Marines. They began to mutate without control, dying to a curse of changing flesh. These same mutated brothers then rose again unharmed, only to suffer the agony of the change over and over again in a repeating cycle against which nothing could be done. With the Coven pursued until its threat was extinguished, the remaining Thousand Sons cut a portal back to Damire, where they found a world much alike that they had recently destroyed, but obviously in decline; its air rancid and its buildings ruined.

Back in reality, and furnished with the knowledge that the Vadanglow was a lie of the Great Ocean, Lisk and the handful of his surviving brothers were forced to collapse the final route into the Grin with their aetheric might, leaving their forsaken brothers within with the strange blades which had opened the way. As the Thousand Sons did so, they witnessed the once hale people of Damire wither to dried leather corpses, and their structures finally fall into clouds of ash. The forces of the Imperium fleet which recovered the Thousand Sons would report to Lisk that the other worlds of Damire had simply vanished. Damire itself was placed under a cordon, over which the Thousand Sons would maintain vigilance for a century against the possibility of the system once again being reborn from the ether.

Cult of the Undying Emperor

The following account is based upon information gathered during the interrogation of the disgraced captain of the 8th Expeditionary Fleet vessel *Lex Principium*.

Among the men and women of the great Imperial war effort, the majesty of the Emperor and the grandeur of His galactic vision was often a topic of discussion. Invariably, such talk also veered into the realms of the Emperor's longevity. In the early years of the Great Crusade, the Emperor had existed as a presence in the galaxy long enough to become legend, with records surviving for many families of their distant ancestors having met or fought alongside Him in mythical times on Ancient Terra. Many speculated as to His age, for had an Emperor-like being not fought on Terra a thousand years before even the Great Crusade had begun? To a few, regardless of what He may have claimed to the contrary, the Emperor was an immortal being who could never die; He had conquered death itself and would live to conquer the very cosmos. This was the idea upon which the Cult of the Undying Emperor was shaped.

Deifying the Emperor was not entirely uncommon, with discipline officers and iterators tasked with suppressing it; however, this early cult of Emperor-worship gained traction quickly. It is thought to have originated almost from the declaration of Terran Unity, and spread quickly among the Expeditionary fleets before vast distances were between them. Beginning with an idea that was agreeable, it was adopted as a belief by large swathes of Imperial personnel, even if it was not openly spoken of, and required no organised ritual. This idea only became harmful when within the 8th Expeditionary Fleet unscrupulous individuals exploited it, peddling supposedly holy trinkets and pendants of the Imperial Aquila in exchange for supplementary ration tokens. An industry of relics formed, through misinformation and myth, soon trading in the misbegotten teeth and bodily fluids of '*martyrs*' who had died for the Emperor, stolen from post-Compliance medicae encampments and war graves.

This macabre trade soon came to support other unsavoury activists, who found a ready source of human viscera required for their own rituals. Under the guise of the Cult of the Undying Emperor, practitioners of warpcraft came to support this trade and gather the materials required to summon their gods of hell into reality. To cover their activities, they spoke of the Daemonic in terms of the sanctic, and of their gods as angels and saints, perverting the language of the Imperial Truth, adapting it to become in itself a religious credo – for it stood to reason that with the use of the blood and bones of martyrs who died serving Him, they could open the gates to an illuminated heaven of the Emperor's creation. This operation became well known among believers, and with the help of a sympathetic captain they formed an area of openly unholy consecration within the bulk freighter *Lex Principium*, whereupon they called all of their followers to gather for the rituals to begin. When they opened the Empyrean within the bowels of the ship however, their lies unravelled. The cultists knew not what powers they invoked, nor how to contain them. The ship's captain was alerted by the screams of his Astropath and Navigator, neither of whom would survive the night. Unable to reach his security detail, he locked down the bridge and signalled distress to the fleet.

A Sokar pattern Stormbird was immediately dispatched, containing a small contingent of the Iconoclasts of the XVIIth Legion and the Corpse Grinders of the IVth Legion. Together, the two dour strike teams went about the grim work of purging the ship, finding it to be filled with lunatic cultists and grotesque xenos spawn, whom they dispatched with equal effect. The immediate threat neutralised, the XVIIth Legion, having already earned a reputation in the early years of the Great Crusade for the unremitting destruction of religious cults, undertook a short campaign of cleansing, their reputation alone prompting Imperial citizens to identify the guilty relic traders and give up any known remaining cultists. Ironically, when reuniting with his Legion, Lorgar would study the same report, and it is understood by Imperial scholars that some of the ritual terms first used by the Cult of the Undying Emperor to beguile their members as to their true intentions were included in the *Lectitio Divinitatus*.

Addendum: Emperor Worship

It has been many years since this account was first conceived in secret. I know now that I will not live to see what becomes of our Imperium, and so may therefore write without regret or the apprehension felt by those who, like me, remember walking by the Emperor's side during the Great Crusade. I refer to the new Imperial cult which openly worships Him, the existence of which is contrary to His will.

In the long decades since Ullanor, when the Emperor ceased to command His armies across the stars, His frightened subjects have clutched ever more desperately for solace in what they have perceived to be His words and works. Their desire for His presence in their lives has led to the creation of a new belief, variously called the Imperial Faith or the Faith of the Emperor Our Saviour; which is rooted in the text of the *Lectitio Divinatatus*, spawned from the ravings of thrice-damned Lorgar Aurelian. These foolish souls worship the Emperor as a god and it can only be imagined what bitter amusement the Golden Primarch, should he yet live, derives to see that the very matter over which the Emperor chastised him is become the foundation of His kingdom.

Such worship of the Emperor is a step towards the use of faith as a tool with which to pervert His designs. The new lords of Terra do not act to halt its spread, but rather use it as a means to meet their own mortal ends. It is now more imperative than ever to remember the ascendance of the empirical, secular Imperium He created. Knowledge of the Great Lie does not diminish the value of the Truth; the threat of the Daemon can be understood and countered rationally using the artifices of technology. His sons are marvels of science, not the demi-gods of myth and, could He speak, the Emperor would be the first to deny His own divinity.

Piercing the Veil

"We have seen the stars from behind, and found they have no clockwork mechanisms, no golden chariots carrying them abroad."

From the works of Iterator Prime Kyril Sindermann

While the very nature of the Warp is unreal, the threat posed by the Daemon and the Outsider extends beyond the metaphysical to tear at the very foundations of reality. Many would choose to deny that this threat was real, and for them the armour of ignorance would be shattered alongside their fragile sanities during the Horus Heresy. For those who sought to hold the darkness at bay – the organisations established through the years of the Great Crusade – the threat which they girded themselves against was a very practical concern. These dauntless protectors would struggle to endure in the tumult of unreality unleashed by Horus and his allies, though they would clad themselves in the armour of knowledge, and wield powerful weapons in the forms of archaeotech and psyarkana. These weapons of esoteric provenance were both as real and as unreal as the sinister denizens of the Warp, and were used to turn the arcane against the Empyreal. However, such potent weapons hold edges which cut both ways, and the Imperium would suffer under the attentions of its own protectors.

Keeping the Darkness at Bay

During the terrible period of history known as Old Night, evil rose to its zenith in the galaxy. For thousands of years, unabated horrors assailed the isolated worlds of humanity, bringing our species to the very brink of annihilation and reducing Mankind to a pitiable race, a shadow of the glories of its past. This era of horrors, perpetuated by vivisector-warlords and techno-barbarian tyrants, was marked by plagues of insanity, the scourge of famine and the tragedy of unending war. Worst of all of the terrors faced by our species was the incursion of the Warp, brought about by the emergence of ever more psykers and the machinations of sorcerer-kings. Human worlds were swallowed whole by the Warp or else subjugated to become the slaves of Daemons.

On such worlds, the human body became inconstant, rife mutation twisting the shape of men and women beyond recognition into something entirely alien. Cruelty, brutality and suffering were the only constants of this age – this is the galactic anarchy which the Emperor opposed and the horror of the darkness which the Imperial Truth was employed to hold at bay.

If upholding the Imperial Truth was a necessary evil of the galactic dominion the Emperor sought to achieve, it also served many purposes in the growth of the Imperium, from the breaking up of communities which shared common beliefs that might oppose Him, to creating an equality of opportunity such that any citizen of merit might rise to prominence of their own accord. Furthermore, by breaking the tribalism and in-fighting different cultural groups had held for millennia through the creation of a single Imperial cultural doctrine, and by freeing the Imperial populace of the cosmic dread which mortals feel when contemplating the vastness of the galaxy, He enabled all of Mankind to set their focus towards the single goal of the Imperial dream. These are all noble and rational causes, though they are shadowed in significance by what appears to have been the greater advantage, as observed by those who were aware of the Great Lie. Every religion, ancient and esoteric, encountered by the Great Crusade in two centuries shared one common factor: that worship draws the attention of Ruinous Powers within the Warp. Organised religions, cults of personality, the worship of god-kings and of xenos, all of these, through some ethereal means, empower beings madmen describe as the *'True Gods'*.

It would not be beyond reason to posit that one of the secret motivations of the Emperor in promulgating the Imperial Truth was to weaken the threads which bind humanity to the foul sentiences in the Empyrean, and break the grasp of the Ruinous Powers. Given the vital importance that the Imperial Truth became a universal galactic doctrine, the means taken by the Emperor and His Sigillite to ensure that it was enforced were many, and in some cases, extreme. However, their consistent purpose points to some justified ends being served which may be unfathomable to lesser, human intellects. This purpose was to suppress at all cost wider knowledge of the supernatural nature of the Warp. To this end, specific and covert bodies were created, and for the duration of the Great Crusade they largely succeeded.

The Actors of Illumination

Foremost and most well-known of these bodies acting in support of the Imperial Truth were the tools of the vast Imperium propaganda machine. The iterators, an Order of rhetoricians, philosophers and educators, were primed with the express purpose of propagating the message of the Imperial Truth throughout the Great Crusade. They would ply their trade on every Compliant world newly entering the Imperium, as well as reinforce the secularity and rationality of the tenets of the Imperial Truth on worlds decades or centuries part of the Imperium. The iterators were recruited from the most erudite, sharp-witted and silver-tongued teachers of Terra, men and women trained at the direction of Malcador the Sigillite to have such a firm belief in the Imperial Truth and keen grasp of rhetoric, debate and diplomacy that when making their orations they could smother any arguments, however sensible, to the contrary of their specific dogma.

Of Myths and Monsters

Malcador the Sigillite's historical arcanists have identified certain similarities in aspect between the creatures described in the myriad mythologies of Ancient Terra and common manifestations of Warp entities. Among the many examples of shared attributes Daemons have with the monsters of Mankind's earliest days are the thirsting for life-essence of vampyres, the wanton cruelty of tygers and the rancid stench of trolls. It is unclear which among these mythological creations were simple fabrication, and which can be genuinely attributed to the Daemonic.

While considered an overwhelming success from the perspective of the great and good of the Great Crusade, on many worlds the speech of iterators was seen as bombast and magniloquent, for deep-seated strictures and beliefs cannot be easily changed with the introduction of new and often inflammatory concepts. The master of Jungmagr is recorded to have said of the army of iterators which spread among his populace after that bloody Compliance, "*Better fangs chew'd us through, than left these serpents' honeyed tongues to turn us, for snake is root of our evils and woes befall us now forth*". Though many Compliances may have seemed peaceful thanks to the work of the iterators, more often than not it was the threat of the bolters of the Legiones Astartes standing at the iterators' sides which cowed worlds into Compliance, rather than eloquence and logic. As the pre-Imperium adage goes, '*a mind changed against its will is of the same opinion still*' and as such should have been more closely heeded, for in the haste to move on to greater conquests, the Great Crusade left behind a string of worlds ready to reject the iterators' platitudes, ripe for the influence of the Outsider and the Demagogue to fester and ferment rebellion.

His Talons

The primary armed enforcers of the Imperial Truth were thought to be the Emperor's Talons, and at the Sigillite's behest, the callous, grey-clad secret police force known as the Elucidators. Being at the Emperor's side throughout the wars of Unification and the Great Crusade, it was only natural that His Legio Custodes were His weapon of choice when He intervened personally in esoteric matters, no command given by the Master of Mankind being beyond the ability of the Custodians to carry out. Beyond reproach, the Legio Custodes were given a lighter hand than any other Imperial force when it came to the handling of the forbidden and dangerous artefacts of the occult. It was their duty to apprehend and interrogate persons with knowledge of arcane sciences and access to forbidden archaeotech, learning all they could and capturing any relics of significance worthy of future study or use to the Emperor and His technicians. While most such individuals were summarily executed after their secrets were extracted, some few were of value and thusly offered a choice to serve the Master of Mankind rather than be put to death.

The Sisters of Silence were known to be witchseekers, and though they served their quiet purpose to hunt out valuable human psykers for the choirs of the Astra Telepathica, it was also at their discretion to further investigate the activities of a rogue psyker. Such investigations were wont to reveal the usage of a developing psyker with ill intent by a cult or through the abuse of local dominie of ancient and forbidden practices. Whether such occurrences were accidental or intentional, to have touched the other side taints a psyker and any persons with which they were in contact, resulting in the wrath of the Sisters of Silence being unleashed upon a locality in the form of Pursuer cadres, Erinyes jetbike squadrons and the dreaded Divider stealth-craft. When death was the only solution available, the Officio Assassinorum could also be employed, but in those rare instances of extremis where such death was required as to end an entire world for the perfidy of making foul compacts with the entities of the Warp, the Titans of the Ordo Sinister could be unshackled, bringing ruination wherever they trod.

Elucidatum

Many mysteries were unravelled in the aftermath of the Horus Heresy through investigation into the archives of the Sigillite. In the sealed underground archivum of Azure-Locus-CI-γδ, the preserved records of the activities of Malcador's secret police –the so-called Officers of Elucidation– were found; corroborating hearsay long dismissed as simple fearmongering.

The Order Elucidatum, colloquially known as the Elucidators or Tallymen, acted in two functions; openly as apparent contributors to the bureaucracy of the Great Crusade and covertly as iconoclasts, censors and murderers. In their open capacity, the Elucidators travelled freely among the Expeditionary fleets of the Great Crusade, operating as supporting data scribes to the offices of iterators, future planetary governors and census takers as a function of the Administratum. The work of the Elucidatum was vital in sifting and analysing the data gathered from newly Compliant civilisations; categorising, scrutinising and providing useful demographic information to those now in command, or gently guiding the rhetoric required of iterators to bring about more efficient transitions into Imperial authority.

The unfettered access the Order had in regards to the databanks of combined knowledge of the Great Crusade was instrumental to their ulterior purpose for being abroad in the galaxy. By analysing census data and being privy to the information provided by the ambassadors of newly found human worlds, the Elucidators could determine the risk posed by nascent or suppressed religious cults post-Compliance. This information facilitated the pursuit of their true objectives: the assassination of demagogues, the destruction of proscribed texts and the suppression of any persons with knowledge of or contact with the manifestations of the Warp. The mandate possessed by the Order Elucidatum was underwritten with the seal of the Sigillite himself, allowing the Tallymen, who were themselves expert and highly specialised warriors, to take immediate possession of any military command or asset they required, other than the Legiones Astartes, to complete their mission.

These missions were chosen and undertaken independently, for the Sigillite had recruited highly intelligent warriors from the finest military orders in the Sol System for his secret police, as part of the earliest of his initiatives to find men and women of inquisitive nature who might seek out traitors, spiritualists, witches and those tainted by them. The Elucidators held no trials, trusting to the logic of their Truth and the insight of the information they compiled in selecting their targets for 'elucidation'.

Though few truly knew of the exploits of the Elucidators, they earned a dark reputation. They were a faction responsible for the burning of fanes with all of their worshippers still huddled within, and the pogroms of religious castes in the rural wilds of countless worlds. Their name quickly became synonymous with genocide. Malcador's secret police were sanctioned to make use of seratoxin, a nerve agent dispersed to ensure that the minds of all witnesses of any kind of immaterial incursion event: man, woman or child, were utterly expunged and placed beyond any hope of recollection. A cruel fate, the so called 'Brain Destroyer' leaves its victims as withered husks, unable to respond to more than autonomic instinct and phototropic cues.

Their atrocities were not limited only to the murder of entire lines of Imperial households, for as the Great Crusade advanced into the farthest reaches of space, it was the Elucidators who took it upon themselves to wipe out the many early cults of Emperor worship within the Expeditionary fleets. The Tallymen became a Bogeyman or Chowkidar to be feared in the minds of common folk residing in the bellies of the vast warships of the Great Crusade, with elders admonishing misbehaving children by invoking their name.

Had Mankind been trusted to know of the outer dark and reject it of its own volition, the Order Elucidatum would not have been needed. Thousands upon thousands of deaths and the massacres of innocents simply accused of association or belief in warpcraft without due process could have been avoided. Their tally of murders is a direct contribution to the cost of the Great Lie.

The Zealous Legions

The Imperial Fists Legion is thought to have also been subtly employed by the Emperor to combat Daemonology. The nature of the Imperial Fists is one of stoic adherence to duty, a zealous loyalty engineered into the core of their genetic code, steeling them against corruption. Though they are known to be His consummate defenders, their purpose may have been to defend more than His walls, but also the soul of the Imperium. For much of the Great Crusade, the Emperor kept the VIIth Legion and their Primarch, Rogal Dorn, close to His side. Unlike his brother Magnus, Dorn could not be easily swayed to seek knowledge for its own sake, instead he was trusted to exercise restraint and caution in his studies. For this reason, it is rumoured that the Emperor, over a period of decades, shared secrets with Rogal Dorn which but a few individuals were privy to; allowing the Praetorian to better understand the need for the Imperial Truth and the urgency with which the true enemy must be combatted.

During the Great Crusade, the Imperial Fists came to uphold the Imperial Truth' with a passionate zeal. As they encountered sorcerers and preachers of the profane, they understood and were able to identify their enemy's weaknesses, pioneering the use of an arsenal of psyarkana devices capable of combatting the influence of the Warp. Throughout the course of the Great Crusade, Rogal Dorn accumulated one of the Imperium's greatest repositories of the arcane within the vast vaults of *Phalanx*, a valuable resource kept hidden from his brothers which, though he was reticent to employ it, was of great use during the Siege of Terra.

The Death Guard too played a role in enforcing the Imperial Truth. Mortarion, in his hatred of the Outsider and its sorcery, actively sought out worlds tainted by what he perceived to be the foul influence of the Warp. On these worlds he acted not as the Liberator of Barbarus, but as a Reaper, the Death Lord come at the head of a host of the XIVth Legion's Destroyers to harvest the souls of those he saw as diseased. Mortarion's warriors were among the first to make widespread use of the bale flamer and so called psyk-out or psi-reactive munitions. The taint of warp magick was to Mortarion the most terminal and incurable of contagions, and was a sickening blight, relentlessly in need of eradication.

Independent Preparations

Other powers also directly or inadvertently upheld the Imperial Truth. The technophages of the Malagra, the Mechanicum's internal function of cleansing, for a time acted to maliciously hinder the works of any magos tinkering with the dangerously cryptic. Within the Mechanicum, the adherents of the Malagra doctrines sought to maintain the purity of the inner workings of the cults of the Omnissiah. They were the hunters of Heretek magi, and were known to declare dormant whole forges if any spoor of the highest forbidden heretechnical orders of damnation were found within, such as the curse of artificial sentience, the melding of xenos technology with the blessed machine, or the drawing of energy from the Warp direct.

Among the Chartist Captains and Rogue Traders too, certain precautions were taken against the threat of the Other. Operating at the distant borders of the galaxy and frequently traversing the Immaterium, these captains encountered arcane phenomenon beyond description; sights and sensations which drove men mad with but a fleeting glance. Often, they would operate independently, away from Imperial scrutiny, where they could take their own measures to ensure the safety and security of their vessels. When threatened by the Outsider or the Daemon, such captains, many scarcely more than buccaneers, would have had the means prepared with which to respond with force and resourcefulness in kind, though they might never dare to declare such within the bounds of the Imperium.

The Winds of Fear

During the dark days of the Horus Heresy the power of the Warp reached ascendance, the ruinous entities within drawn closer to the narrow divide between the Empyrean and realspace than had been experienced at any time since the Age of Strife. Knowledge of the existence and madness of that which lay beyond the veil reached its height among the worlds of the Imperium. Whether through first-hand experience, reliable eyewitness accounts, dark rumour or the frantic babbled hearsay carried by uncounted refugees in flight, the citizens of the Imperium at a stroke learned that the Daemons which they had so long denied were in fact real. With this realisation, panic and dread spread to become a galactic hysteria. The threat of the approach of the Warmaster only fanned the flames of agitation; on many worlds the fever pitch of terror ground to a halt any hope of resistance as the Traitor Legions arrived, the gatekeepers of these worlds paralysed with terror or already fleeing. The Warmaster understood the power of fear and used it widely as part of his strategy of conquest. Sending his emissaries ahead of his fleets, Horus spread word of the Emperor's Great Lie and threatened to unleash the powers he now commanded to cow populations into submission.

Worlds lost to the Warmaster were said to have become *'dark'*. This sentiment was both figurative and literal. These worlds would immediately cease all trade and communication with their neighbours, their space ports would be blockaded and their astropathic choirs silenced. The flood of refugees escaping the onrush of the Warmaster's armies would dry up, with only a rare few ships allowed to escape, carrying fear as a weapon to break other worlds. Among the refugees were the Warmaster's agents, insinuating themselves into positions to destabilise neighbouring star systems. To many observers, it appeared as if the darkness of space drew close to these lost worlds; isolated they would regress to a state pre-dating Imperial enlightenment. Fortress worlds of the Imperium slipped into darkness and simply disappeared, never to be seen again. Many worlds were stripped barren by the Warmaster's engineers of war, their people and resources pressed into service in the Warmaster's fleets and armies. Industrial and Forge Worlds were captured and their denizens enslaved to continue production in Dark Compliances. Other worlds found less useful or more resistant were scoured of life by dread atomic fire or the life-eater virus. Still others were sacrificed wholesale to maintain the power of the Ruinstorm, perhaps the darkest fate of all.

As worlds cascaded into darkness, conditions became ideal for all of the evils of space to emerge. Freighters full of refugees would carry within them a melting pot of worshippers of ancient religions, and for surely the first time, many different such cults would mix, each carrying a piece of a larger and more complex black ritual. The sequence of worlds becoming dark would lead to tidal waves of fearful emotions, which would in turn be reflected in the Warp, leading to indiscriminate, large scale Daemonic incursions on dozens of worlds. Rebels and cultists across the galaxy threw off the pretence of Compliance to

challenge their Imperial Governors, and such distractions to loyal defenders only paved Horus' advance. Other forces took advantage of the Imperium's weakness. The Unspeakable King would re-emerge, as would the psychopathy of Du'Maash. Xenos threats banished to the fringes of the galaxy would rear their heads to eke out a corner of the Imperium as their own, and those within cordons of quarantine would look to their skies to see the battleships of their Imperial gaolers no longer hanging above them. In many instances, the fearful tales of the Daemon abroad within the Imperium ravaging loyal systems may even have been misattributed to the influx of rampaging xenos breeds taking advantage of the Imperium's tumult, but given the paucity of surviving records, it is impossible to say what fates befell such worlds.

An Imperium Abandoned

Many questioned at this time if more could have been done to stem the rising panic. The Legiones Astartes, the symbol of Imperial strength and unity, were sundered after the bitter blows of Isstvan, Calth, Signus and many more. Shattered Legion forces scattered across the vastness of the galaxy waged their guerrilla campaigns to harry the onrush of the darkness, but could do little to significantly slow it. The vast martial might of the Imperial Army was split in twain, responding to a million cries for aid or consuming itself with in-fighting. Planetary garrison forces could scarcely keep up with the deluge of refugees and quickly became wary of their neighbours, mistrust winning over compassion thanks to the artifices of the Warmaster. With Imperial defenders in disarray, voices were raised to ask questions of the whereabouts of the Emperor and His agents of illumination, those most trusted and most required to keep the darkness at bay in the Imperium's time of need.

The Emperor had returned to His seat on Terra after the Triumph at Ullanor, trusting to His chosen son, Horus, to complete the Great Crusade, while unbeknownst to His Imperium He was embroiled in His Great Work. It may have appeared to the masses that, throughout the years of the Horus Heresy, He was either unaware or uncaring of the plight of the trillions of souls looking to Him for deliverance, and with the weight of that perception came despair. The truth though is far more frightening, as the secrets behind the Eternity Gate were of the utmost importance, holding the full attention of the indomitable mind of the Master of Mankind, allowing Him no respite in which He could turn His gaze to the stars. With Him, His Talons retreated to Terra, playing little significant part in the wars of the Horus Heresy, instead seeing to the body of the Emperor and enacting His secret will. So too did the Imperial Fists Legion and their Primarch return to Terra, tasked with the fortification of the Throneworld. Beyond the light of Sol, the Imperial Fists were instrumental in the defence of the heartlands of the Imperium within the Segmentum Solar, here at least they monitored the flow of rumour and brought reassurance to isolated planetary governors that they were not forgotten. These efforts were often undermined in the early stages of what would become known as the Solar War, a campaign of calculated misdirection and manipulation whose objective was to weaken the seat of power of Terra prior to the Warmaster's arrival.

The Forge Worlds of the Mechanicum, ever jealous of their domains, became isolationist and reclusive, beyond the reach of Mars and Terra both. The fate of the fanatical Malagra Order is tied to the revelation of the Dark Mechanicum, and as with many masters of the Forge Worlds, they had little interest in the plight of the wider Imperium, being as they were otherwise occupied with the division of the Mechanicum and the secession of Mars. Of the Chartist Captains and Rogue Traders in the galaxy, they made themselves known in many small ways, arriving unheralded to aid the Imperium or, in their disbelief and shock, let loose their anger at the idea of civil war; punishing both the Emperor's and Warmaster's forces in equal measure. Such was observed when the Golden Fleet appeared to burn the skies above Tallarn, and when the Admiralty of Joss crippled the moon of Drussen IV.

Multiple Rogue Traders are thought also to have contributed on both sides to the Sea of Fire, the devastating void warfare engagement across the Beta-Garmon region. On the whole, their forces were too far from the core worlds in need of their aid, too scattered to make any concerted impact on the wider war and too few to turn the tide.

As to the Order Elucidatum, Horus knew of their presence within the Great Crusade. Being a skilled general, he had observed early on certain regiments of the Imperial Army peeling off from their ordered advances to pursue hitherto unknown objectives and had traced these back to the offices of the Sigillite. When he came to purge his ships of iterators, Remembrancers and Imperial bureaucrats he did not underestimate the Elucidators, tasking his equerry Maloghurst with their extermination.

Outside of the Traitors' fleets, the Elucidators found their work outstripping them as the birth of the Ruinstorm gave rise to innumerable new targets, far beyond the ability of their Order to cope with alone, particularly when those among the Imperial Army whom they had come to rely on were entrenched in warfare on multiple fronts. The individual Elucidators became fragmented as the Age of Darkness proceeded, their fates unknown and unsought after. From the *Unbalanced Scales*, we can deduce that perhaps dozens of Elucidators spread throughout the Expeditionary fleets were in fact covert double agents of the Alpha Legion and, at the onset of the Horus Heresy, these were recalled to other, unknowable posts. In 012.M31, the Order Elucidatum was formally dissolved by the Sigillite without fanfare, and records pointing towards its existence

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Ancient Weapons

Combat reports of early encounters between the Legiones Astartes and the entities of the Warp reveal a peculiar facet of the nature of the Daemon. It has been noted that for some ill-known reason, Daemons appear to be all but immune to advanced projectile and energy based weaponry in their freshly manifested state. Attacks of a more primitive nature on the other hand, such as the hacking of a blade or the setting of flame to such a creature, have been reported to have an exaggerated effect.

It has been posited by radical rhetoricians that those weapons wielded by ancient men are held most in dread by the Daemon itself, for as beings of scavenged sentience and emotion, they are not wounded on the physical plane but on an ideological level, by the primordial expectation of pain. Furthermore, the Daemons' vulnerability in this regard might have informed the very weapons with which we continue to wage war, for why else would the Emperor have commanded His Legions to wield swords as readily as their bolters in our current age?

expunged. Those few Tallymen who survived to return to their master on Terra were not lauded as either heroes or villains but quietly inducted into different secretive agencies, for Malcador was still in need of proven men and women with their particular skills.

Arcana of the Legiones Astartes

At the height of the Horus Heresy, the Legiones Astartes were exposed almost without exception to the esoteric, whether they chose to pursue it or not. Dozens of battles turned on the ability of the Legions to draw upon or combat the ethereal. Many battles revolved around the acquisition or destruction of artefacts and relics which would previously have been rejected as too dangerous or too costly to use by any Legion. Other battles were incited or decided by the walls of realspace being torn asunder to admit Daemons into a war zone.

Conflicts such as the Battle of Perditus in 009.M31 began when the 98th Clan Company of the Iron Hands intercepted a taskforce of the Death Guard's 1st Company pillaging an interdicted Mechanicum research facility. As recorded by the Iron Father leading the Xth Legion force, the Death Guard sought an object held by the Mechanicum of Perditus, which was supposed to have been able to becalm the tides of the Ruinstorm that had burst into the skies of the Ultima Segmentum fewer than two years previously. The Iron Hands and Death Guard fought each other to a standstill, denying one another the prize of Perditus' technoarcana, until after over a month of conflict, the battle was eventually broken by the intervention of the Lion. Ordered to leave or be destroyed by the Primarch of the Ist Legion, the Iron Hands and Death Guard both retreated. It is believed by the 98th Clan Company's leadership that the Lion took possession of the artefact on Perditus, an item of great value to the Dark Angels in navigating the tumult of the Warp for the waxing duration of the Ruinstorm.

First Captain Ahriman of the Thousand Sons Legion breached the defences of the psykana gaol of Kamiti Sona in 010.M31, intent on finding within the deep space void station an inmate of worth known only to his Corvidae Occult. The ensuing deaths of several prominent Sisters of Silence gaolers broke the null-aura which enshrouded the void station. The substance of reality, already punctured by the machinations of the Thousand Sons, burst under the pressure wave of hundreds of deafened psykers regaining their etheric senses, allowing unbound entities of the Warp to spill into the facility drawn by the prisoners' anguish. Only the intervention of a contingent of Space Wolves – a force known to react with overwhelming brutality to the incursions of Daemons – and a Librarian of the Knights Errant, both apparently hunting Ahriman himself could contain the threat. Regardless of these efforts, with their revelation to the galaxy, the fates of Kamiti Sona and its inmates were sealed.

Whatever the outcome of such battles, it has become clear that each and every encounter of the arcane during the Age of Darkness served to lend strength to the Warmaster's campaign. Repeated Daemonic incursions and the use of technoarcana which activated simultaneously in both realspace and the Warp weakened the gates at the threshold of hell. Increasingly as these ancient borders creaked, new portals appeared; gratuitously dispersed amongst the width and breadth of the galaxy. This served to allow the Ruinstorm Daemon to manifest of its own volition, strengthening its hold over our material realm.

Aetheric Ambitions

Among the Primarchs of the Traitor Legions, attitudes to their allies within the Ruinstorm appear to have been conflicting and wide-ranging. Perturabo looked upon the beings of the Warp with indifference, while Mortarion and Angron spurned them with spiteful disdain. Fulgrim, it is thought, came to embrace the powers of the Warp, finding in them something beatific, rapturous and all-consuming. It is Lorgar Aurelian's relationship with the Warp and the force which he describes as the Primordial Truth however, which is most pertinent to any account of the role of the Daemon within Horus' rebellion.

Inferred from letters exchanged with his mentor Kor Phaeron and his seminal written work, the *Book of Lorgar*, some decades prior to the events on Isstvan, Lorgar Aurelian undertook a pilgrimage which led him to the distant and dark corners of the galaxy. His Father the Emperor, whom Lorgar venerated, had denied His own godhood, and in doing so humbled Lorgar and his Legion. From that day on Monarchia, it became the Primarch of the XVIIth Legion's singular, bitter ambition to redeem his belief that the deities he learned of during his upbringing on Colchis truly existed, and in doing so to demonstrate the Emperor as being a hypocrite. To prove the Emperor's Imperial Truth as a falsehood, Lorgar sought to discover beings which exhibited true divinity. Lorgar was indeed proven right in this journey, and though he may not have been the first of the Primarchs to learn of the Great Lie of his own volition during this decades-long quest, his discovery can be considered the most formative.

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The Death Lord's Hypocrisy

Given Mortarion's vehement hatred of psykers, sorcerers and the arcane, it would appear to be contrary to his own interests to have joined Horus and the forces of the Ruinstorm in bringing disorder to the Imperium, let alone make use of such powers to further his own ends. Little can be known of Mortarion's personal feelings about this perceived hypocrisy during the Age of Darkness, though voices have been raised in speculation and condemnation both. His estranged sons however, denying Mortarion could have fallen so far so fast, continued to display a weary loyalty.

Later accounts by Captain Garro, formerly of the Death Guard, suggests there surely must have been some internal struggle at the Death Lord's core, for by throwing in his lot with the Warmaster he had allied himself with all that he despised. It is possible, claimed Garro, that Mortarion could have had a hand in undermining the dark powers of the Ruinstorm while in his position as the Warmaster's closest and most faithful ally. Perhaps Mortarion continued to act in the Imperium's favour, dulling the edge of the Warp-borne blade which Horus sought to wield.

Captain Morturg, a reliable voice in matters of his Primarch, suggested hopefully that Mortarion would have experienced remorse in siding with Horus, wishing instead for the purer and heady days of the Great Crusade where he fought alongside his vaunted brother Ferrus Manus. However, if the string of travesties committed by the Death Guard in these past dark years is to be the evidence they are judged by, Mortarion's Legion were a dangerous enough foe to the Imperium without the added menace of the Daemon.

Warrior Lodges

Uncovered during the tumult of the Horus Heresy, many of the Legions, both Traitor and Loyalist, contained within them secret Orders. These Orders, or lodges, are believed to have been propagated by the Word Bearers during the Great Crusade, and shared many of the characteristics and rituals associated with the activities of the occult. Though they claimed to have been simple warrior fraternities to engender the bonds of brotherhood between Legionaries regardless of rank, the lodges were used by the Warmaster to target Space Marines across the Legions whom he could manipulate into pledging fealty to him above all others, be it their gene-sire or ultimately the Emperor. As the Horus Heresy progressed, the warriors within these lodges were the first among the Traitor Legions inducted into the mysteries of the Warp by the Word Bearers, and the first among their brethren to know of and commune with Horus' allies within the Ruinstorm.

Given what we now know of Lorgar's corruption and insanity, it can be assumed that the day he discovered the Truth he so fervently sought, as the result of some psychically induced trauma, his mind cracked. After this fateful encounter, revisions to the *Book of Lorgar* – often identified by a change from the use of ink to blood in examples recovered from XVIIth Legion casualties – are openly written in insane ritualistic verse. The tone of Kor Phaeron's letters also was much changed after this time, referring openly to the spiritual in the language of worship. From them we learn that Lorgar, far from resting on the laurels of vindication of his discovery of gods within the Warp, turned from the Emperor and became a vile prophet of the new, dark powers he found. His ambitions grew with his Legion from the humble to the grandiose and, in the final years of the Great Crusade, from the merely instructive to the paradigm altering. Lorgar, by the time of the Horus Heresy, desired nothing less than to achieve harmony between Mankind and the Primordial Annihilator, creating a symbiotic ascendance for both resulting in a galactic consonance. He saw to this calling with serious-minded thoughtfulness, seeking to build a grand vision of dimensional unity with considered and prudent steps, first by spreading the religion of Colchis, that of the True Gods, and then through selective compacts with those powers within the Warp most amiable to his purpose.

Horus learned of these deeper mysteries of the Warp from his conferences with his brother Lorgar. To Horus, the blandishments of worship and the spreading of the Primordial Truth were at best irrelevances and at worst a repetition of the failings of the Great Crusade and the spreading of the Imperial Truth. Horus had no desire to re-tread this bellicose past, but looked instead to a glorious future in which he would crown himself master of the galaxy. To Horus, the Warp and the benighted sentiences within were little more than additional pawns he could add to his regicide board; an additional resource with which to confound and disrupt the Emperor's plans. Horus saw only the cold and logical calculations involved in drawing forth aid from beyond: men were exchanged for Daemons; worlds and words were exchanged for power and all balances ultimately fell in his favour. He was blind to the true risks and sacrifices undertaken in the name of attaining conquest, and the toll such would take on his soul. Any means to victory were justifiable in his eyes, for he believed that when he obtained galactic domination, he would command the right to renegotiate the terms of any obligation. Obtaining immediate power to ensure victory was Warmaster Horus' only concern.

In the bargain, Horus relinquished his very humanity and more. Lorgar is known from letters to Kor Phaeron to have admonished Horus for drawing too quickly and too greedily from the well of power he had introduced his brother to within the Warp, for it risked the ruin of the Aurelian's own designs. Horus' hubris was accelerating to the brink of peril Lorgar's grand vision, what the *Book of Lorgar* describes as '*the melodic cadence of a song of worship writ large across the stars*'. For Horus' part, he ignored the mewling pleas from his brother to slow down, eventually casting off his counsel entire, seeing in him not wisdom but only the weaknesses of zealotry and demagoguery. Uncaring of the Warp's prevailing role in Mankind's future, The Warmaster's divergence of philosophy would foster rivalry between the two, straining one of the few lasting bonds of respect and friendship Horus held with his brother Primarchs.

The Confessions of the Hydra

The *Unbalanced Scales* tells us of the compact made between the Alpha Legion and the Outsider, in the form of a cabal of psychic alien races supposedly serving the best interests of the galaxy, and by extension, Mankind. However, less was known of the Alpha Legion's relationship with the Other until, unbidden, an Alpha Legionnaire turned himself over to the VIIth Legion weeks after the Siege of Terra. He would offer no information when interrogated, other than his name, which he gave as Alpharius, and his purpose; to relate a number of anecdotes to the Imperium, some of which alluded to the Alpha Legion's relationship with the occult. Offering no further value, the Space Marine, given the designation of prisoner 'LXX', was executed for the crime of treason; a testament to this new vengeful and unforgiving era. There is no way to substantiate this warrior's tales. It is suspected that everything he spoke of was a lie.

LXX said of his Legion that even at the very moment the Judgement of Nikaea was spoken they had contradicted it, and continued to do so without remorse, their intention never having been to acquiesce to it. The Alpha Legion saw themselves as being above such directives, believing that they possessed the commensurate knowledge and mastery to preclude themselves from any restriction placed upon them. They had used psykers throughout the Great Crusade and would continue to do so, both of their Librarius, and in the form of their agents, among which were self-proclaimed wizards, warlocks and sorcerers. By sharing to a limited degree the Legion's knowledge and resources with such individuals, the Legion had co-opted them into divulging their secrets of the arcane. Thus, the relevant cells of the Alpha Legion were well enough informed that they could usually mitigate the risk of being overwhelmed through accidental contact with the beings in the Warp.

That paradigm held true even when Lorgar Aurelian made his Pilgrimage into the Warp. Interspersed among the Word Bearers through undisclosed means were a number of Alpha Legionnaires within the Chapter of the Serrated Sun, close to the Golden Primarch's side. When these Space Marines entered the Warp unshielded, they died, but beyond the explanations of Imperial science, two Alpha Legionnaires lived on beyond their own deaths by attaining a form of Daemonic symbiosis. According to LXX, through unknown augury they were

detected and hunted by unnatural entities which were only loosely to be considered Word Bearers Legionaries. Only one Alpha Legionnaire escaped, returning to his Legion to share the knowledge of his new power, submitting himself to interrogation and vivisection.

Another anecdote shared by the prisoner recounts the tale of a number of warriors of the XXth Legion who had independently witnessed and recorded early forms of summoning, binding and possession rituals of a Daemonic nature within the warrior lodges of the Legiones Astartes. Though the Alpha Legion had no need for lodges of their own, they infiltrated several of those amongst other Traitor Legions. Under the tutelage of the so-called Diabolists of the Word Bearers Legion and the lodge masters of the Sons of Horus, they learned the uses of human sacrifice, the necessity of summoning circles, the carving of runes, blood magicks and the drawing out of a soul from the body of a Legionary to allow a new spirit to fill its vessel. These infiltrators would continue to gather knowledge and practice the rites they had learned until, with the completion of their mission or upon some other signal of command, they would return to reunite with the larger Alpha Legion and share their findings with their Primarch.

For the Alpha Legion, the use of psykers remained but a means to an end, the Warp looked upon in rational terms as a source of energy for which the toll for its use was equal and opposite. The practices of witchcraft and Daemonology were simply tools within their arsenal of the Empyrean. Even after learning of the deeper enigmas of the Warp, and of the malignant gods, the majority of the Alpha Legion continued to wield its arcane secrets with rationality and not reverence, accepting the risks as part of the grim equation of sacrifice and enervation. Many Legionaries were volunteered to become possessed as part of experiments to improve the Legion's knowledge and, indeed, for combat deployment, but vitally LXX impressed upon his interrogators that these Legionaries were never given the status of Other, rather simply becoming a new functional link of the Legion's unbroken chain.

The Ultima Taskforce

In distant Ultramar, Roboute Guilliman first looked to his own borders, blinded as he was behind the veil of the Ruinstorm. He was shocked by the rapidity with which Calth was lost, a phenomenal achievement for the Word Bearers in military terms. Had it purely been a war of Legion against Legion, the battle could have dragged on for many more months, even given the total surprise with which Lorgar's forces had struck. The factor which tipped the scales in the battle was not of the *Principia Bellicosa*, whose strategies Guilliman was privately adapting and refining with his Legion, but of a nature previously unknown to him.

With Calth lost for all time, and the threat of ruin hanging over his legacy in Ultramar thanks to the ravages of the Shadow Crusade, the master of Macragge long dwelt upon the theoretical merits of the methods used by the XVIIth Legion. The weaponised use of Warp-based entities became of particular interest to Guilliman who, having overturned the Edict of Nikaea perforce on Calth, was coldly ready to adapt any practical method of defence against the esoteric threats he faced.

In secret, Guilliman gathered thirteen senior Librarians of his Legion to his side in the secure Asteria Wing of the Fortress of Macragge and with them formed the Ultima Taskforce, a group of warriors capable of going to war with weapons of an arcane nature to counter the potential use of the same by the enemy. There he set them to researching the creatures unleashed by the Word Bearers on Calth. With their combined understanding of the Warp and arcana derived from the forced confessions of XVIIth Legion prisoners, this new taskforce set about their task with determination, developing a methodology of empyrical experimentation.

After a spate of esoteric phenomenon caused widespread disorder within the Magna Macragge Civitas, the Ultima Taskforce was moved to a hidden laboratory on the world of Prandium and given greater resources to pursue their logical goal of weaponising summoned warp entities. The ultimate fate of the taskforce would later be suppressed, and is held in another account.

The Vaults of Mimir

The Iron Hands are of note when considering the use of arcana among the Legiones Astartes. Though they were broken on Isstvan V and the Gorgon was slain, the majority of the Legion was yet preparing to deploy from orbit as the massacre was set in motion, a significant proportion of which managed to escape the pursuit of Traitor forces in ships swollen with Legionaries. Making up the larger part of the forces known as the Shattered Legions, the Iron Hands became a thorn in the Warmaster's side, harrying his supply lines. Though much of this force would eventually fall under the command of the patrician Captain Meduson, who waged his concerted campaign by conventional means, many of the Iron Hands' splintered forces resorted to less than noble methods; including the use of forbidden relics stolen from the Vaults of Mimir.

Ferrus Manus was known to have been thorough in containing knowledge and relics of the arcane as he encountered them in his far-ranging conquests during the Great Crusade. Of most interest to him were the technoarcana of far-flung civilisations: unnaturally efficient energy generators; advanced cogitation systems verging on sentience; remarkable terraforming devices and weapons both mundane, such as lethal chemical agents, and of the esoteric that dealt death by unknowable means. He impounded these finds in sealed stasis constructs known only as the Mimir Vaults, which were armed with complex and ingenious defences and counter-measures, so that none but he could access them. The first Mimir Vault was founded on Medusa, though as it filled and the Great Crusade drew the Gorgon ever farther afield, he created more such vaults on worlds and moons so far flung as Glendann, Jericho and Iquonqir. These would continue to act as repositories of recovered technology, inexplicable relics, and even some inventions of his own making.

With Ferrus' death, his Legion suffered a crisis of ideology. Many of the remaining Iron Fathers would see the loss of their Primarch as a mark of his own failing and reject his teachings, markedly his prohibition of the use of certain technologies. Raids were made on the hidden Mimir Vaults by Ferrus' own wilful sons, for the Iron Fathers alone knew where they resided. Mostly these raids met with overwhelming disaster; the countermeasures in place to deter invasion proving too extreme to withstand. The vaults could incinerate whole detachments of Legionaries in moments or else claw starships from orbit through aetheric means, dragging them into an embrace of mutual doom, destroying both the raiders and the vault itself. A paltry few raids met with success, and what could be plundered of the Gorgon's treasures were, with many more evils and boons to be rediscovered and used over the full course of the Horus Heresy.

The use of rites of ressurective cybermancy, sometimes referred to as *'turning the Keys of Hel'* was observed in combat on Gamma-Incunabular against the Emperor's Children, the power of an engine of animachina being abused to bring about the unnatural resurrection and animation of the dead; the hatred of the Iron Hands warriors keeping them from falling still, even when horribly dismembered. With each death, the power of the dreaded reanimus device increased until its energies began to spread inexplicably and undirected, dragging up the decomposing dead of previous battles on the planet. It even raised from the dirt the tattered, scavenged remains of a Basemekanic Beest killed there a century and a half previous; until that tormented creature destroyed the device and the Iron Father manipulating it with the flailing of one mighty fist.

When wielded in combat, such proscribed technologies appeared to friend and foe alike to be the work of the Outsider or the Daemonic Other, and indeed some were of etheric provenance. One such technology, thought to be an arsenal of triboelectric blades, was in fact a set of divining rods for the facilitation of Daemonic possession known as the *Swarga Loke*. When drawn from their sheathes in unison against the advancing ranks of the Sons of Horus on Defence Platform XCVX-VII, the unknowing Iron Hands each beckoned into unreality and their bodies were quickly overcome by new ravenous hosts, which then laid waste to the nearby Sons of Horus and all other life upon the Defence Platform, as was observed by the station's pict-captors. On another occasion, the ritual of neuromantic celerity was invoked when engaged against the Death Guard on Jahmun VI, stripping the metal from the hulls of nearby tanks to reclad battlefield corpses in steel, reforming with their molecular matter into ghoulish automatons of war. The Iron Hands' Space Wolves allies turned upon them immediately upon witnessing this act with savage howls of "*Maleficarum!*", cutting down both the automatons and the Iron Hands before loping away from the battlefield, leaving the Death Guard to watch on in grim appreciation.

The use of the Relics of Mimir became wide-spread. Some were seized by the Iron Hands' enemies as the spoils of war and more yet lay buried in the scattered strongholds and outposts that the Iron Hands frequented for resupply. Others still were traded to the Mechanicum for assistance when in dire need. Each vault contained hundreds of sealed chambers, brimming with techno-arcana, of which only the most immediately accessible were opened and their technologies taken for the arsenals of the Iron Fathers; doubtless many more vaults lie undisturbed and forgotten still. The bounty of the Vaults of Mimir would continue to see use throughout the Horus Heresy, and became rightly regarded as potent psyarkana, for the knowledge required in their use was esoteric, and the results produced by them recondite indeed.

The Death of Hope

With all that came to pass, the very foundations of the Imperium were shaken. Uncertainty was the only truth left in the crippled Imperium, even after the Traitors had fled into the far reaches of the galaxy and the Emperor's loyal sons had looked to one another with eyes devoid of light and parted ways. So many questions must go unanswered. The Traitor, the Daemon and the Outsider have all left their indelible imprint on the soul of the Imperium, their malevolent intent abundant. Though these cankers may have been excised from Terra during the Great Siege, their influence has metastasised throughout the Imperium and will forever spread and grow.

We can only ruminate on what could have been. At the very onset of the Age of Darkness, the fate of Mankind hinged on turning points which we were too blind to see and if we had seen them, were too inured to disbelief to take appropriate action. Had Mankind not failed to take advantage of these momentous events, things may have been very different indeed. If only Guilliman had learned of Isstvan before the muster on Calth. If only the Angel and his Legion had flown from Signus before becoming embroiled in the cataclysm of that world. If only Magnus had not warred with such concupiscence as to break the Edict of Nikaea. If only the Khan had been granted a greater place in his Father's kingdom. If only Alpharius and his inscrutable Legion had forged their own path, independent of the orders of the Warmaster and the Outsider, to save the Imperium with the knowledge they possessed. If only Horus had won his war, and Mankind's perpetuated suffering been avoided. These are the speculations of the bereaved and the guilt of survivors.

In the immediate aftermath of the great Siege, Terra was bereft of its post-human guardians, most of whom left the light of Sol perhaps never to return, chasing the Traitors to the very ends of the galaxy. Of those that remained, Rogal Dorn brooded, contemplating the fate of Mankind, the only one left to believe in the dream of Imperium. He dwelt in a fragile sorrow, quick to turn to rage in his attempts to rebuild the Imperium, though he struggled to find one stone large enough to place upon another in the rubble. In the banquet halls of the great, Roboute Guilliman displayed his strength, his Legion unbloodied on Terran soil. He yet courts the nobility and future leaders of the Imperium, shaping the propaganda of the next age. Each of them showed the weakness of their nature and they were rightly distrusted. Terra is a world which echoes with the weeping of a populace left forever in fear of its protectors. It rues the day the Emperor put His trust in His sons, although in desperation it looks to them even now, rather than in the men and women who saw much and sacrificed more, and could yet save them.

Left to cower for years in the ruins of the Imperial Palace, the survivors condemn the Emperor for His lies and for trying to stem the inevitability of the future. With the wisdom of hindsight, we see that the Emperor created that which He sought to destroy; the conditions perfect for perfidious and ruinous powers to stand triumphant over His galaxy. We condemn Horus for the hubris and ambition which opened a door to our enemies that cannot ever be closed. His death will be inconsequential, for an eternity of war and mistrust awaits. We fear now that the future lords of Terra will seek to silence the bitter truth, and deny the Imperium the wisdom which could save it. We despair too, that even given the knowledge we possess, it cannot free us from damnation.

We lament the future to come.

At the Gates of Hell: The Battle of Signus

"Why would the Emperor, in His infinite wisdom, have created angels if He did not believe that He would someday have to fight devils?"

Artor Calanax, Scholar and Theoritician of the Imperial Court

Nowhere is the malignancy of the Horus Heresy and of the vile allies to which Horus willingly enslaved himself more clearly shown than in the enduring mystery of the Signus conflict. It is a conflict that many have likened to the tragedy that would take place at Calth, a ritual undertaken with callous disregard for the suffering it would cause in an attempt to garner a short-lived strategic advantage over the scattered Loyalist forces. Yet Signus was far more than a move in the great game Horus had begun against his father, no mere feint by which he sought only military gain. Instead, it was the culmination of a secret grudge nurtured over centuries and set to fester by those who called themselves his allies. Unlike at Isstvan, where he allowed the fortunes of war to bring death to Ferrus Manus, at Signus he purposefully orchestrated events to humble and then annihilate the only one of his brothers he had ever considered his better.

Horus was often lauded both for his skills at war and as a statesman, a reputation he had built over centuries of effort ever since the Emperor had snatched him from the pits of Cthonia. He had toiled in war zones without number to catch his father's attention and endured long years of conclaves and triumphs to earn the respect and loyalty of his brothers. Yet Sanguinius took to these skills with a self-effacing ease that must have made the Warmaster's memories of struggle bitter, and worse yet was the adulation that the Angel received from both his brothers and the people of the Imperium. Where Horus walked, voices hushed in fear and respect, where Sanguinius alighted, they were raised in celebration. To Horus, it must have seemed a repudiation of his efforts to achieve just such a position, a hurt long suppressed and yet raw for others to manipulate and twist. Perhaps this grudge was among the wounds that saw him turn his face from the Imperium, one more chink in his loyal soul that allowed betrayal to find a home, it is likely that we will never know. Yet, in the planning and execution of the Signus conflict, this bitterness is made clear, reshaped into a hatred that transcended logic or strategic necessity.

Nowhere is this made clearer than in the Warmaster's choice of weapons. Horus sought to turn the Angel's own sons away from him, to claim the souls of the Blood Angels for his own. To this end, he loosed the creatures of the aetheric domains, those entities called Daemons by some, upon his brother's sons. There are those who have tried to place the blame for such conjurations solely upon the shoulders of Lorgar and his Word Bearers, claiming that Horus was manipulated as much as any of the Loyalist Primarchs, but at Signus such claims ring false. Here Lorgar's errant acolytes were merely tools for Horus' hate, fodder for his anger and that of the entities he bound himself to as the battle unfolded. Horus knew full well what he unleashed when he set loose the hunting dogs of the Empyrean. The Warmaster gave Signus and its people over to the whims of the Warp in exchange for the slaughter of his brother and the enslavement of his warriors. Such a blood-soaked sacrifice, given in the name of hatred and jealousy, has etched a great scar upon the very fabric of the Imperium, one which cannot be healed and festers even now after Horus' death.

Here, at Signus, Horus first laid hands upon a doorway that should never have been opened. Here he shattered the Imperial Truth and the Emperor's careful plans forever.

Here was the Daemon set free from its prison.

The Long Road to Ruin

As one of the largest and most successful Legions in the final years of the Great Crusade, the Blood Angels stood at the pinnacle of its martial strength, at once both an ally Horus could ill do without and a rival he envied. The crimson-clad warriors were committed to several different war zones, most notably at Kayvas, Nartaba, Inconnu and Balhaut, for as the Great Crusade spread across the hinterlands of the galaxy, few Legions were afforded the luxury of operating as a cohesive block. Sanguinius himself commanded the largest of these Hosts, assigned to assist the Alpha Legion in cleansing the wide asteroid fields of Kayvas of Orkoid reavers that had fled from the ruins of Ullanor. This assignment, although not one of the Warmaster's choosing, served his purposes well, keeping the winged Primarch isolated from his other machinations and starving his Legion of the glory they eagerly sought.

The Blood Angels had found little glory in the desolate Kayvas sector, for while the Alpha Legion prosecuted the bulk of the fighting in the depths of the asteroid fields that formed the central cluster of the system, Sanguinius' craft were ordered to hold position and intercept stragglers fleeing the main offensive. The Blood Angels had always excelled as shock assault troops, ever willing to cast themselves into the teeth of enemy fire to seize victory and preserve the lives of their allies, but in the Kayvas system they were forced into a war that ill-suited them. Waiting and watching at the edge of the system, they were forced to react to the assaults of their Orkish foe, engaging it in protracted void battles and bloody boarding actions. Despite this, the

Blood Angels acquitted themselves with valour, allowing none of the xenos raiders to escape the Alpha Legion's trap and suffering only limited losses of personnel and materiel. Yet, though their physical losses were light and easily recovered, the Legion suffered from more significant harm of another kind over the long thirteen months in which they stood sentinel over the outskirts of Kayvas.

Pride was the poison that took hold of the IXth Legion as it hung restless in space over Kayvas. The sporadic fighting and endless waiting had left the warriors of Sanguinius overeager for a new assignment, to be granted a war they found more fitting to their station and skills, where they might claim the glory they felt was their due. After thirteen months of waiting, the war fought deep within Kayvas ended, with the Alpha Legion claiming the lion's share of the credit and granting Sanguinius little more than a terse acknowledgement of his aid. It sat ill with many of his commanders to be treated so by what many considered the least of the Primarchs. Across the galaxy, the other Legions had marked more victories on their tallies, and word had spread that the Warmaster was preparing for some new campaign, yet they'd sat near-idle as the Alpha Legion had fought their hidden war among the asteroids. As the ships of the Alpha Legion departed, there was an air of tense expectation among the warriors of the IXth Legion, an unspoken desire for the visceral glory of battles hard won in the Emperor's name. So it was that when the emissaries of the Warmaster arrived with a call to arms, there were few among the Blood Angels who questioned its nature or necessity.

To Pierce the Cloak of Legend

Despite taking place before the onset of the chaos that followed Horus' first treasonous attacks, surprisingly little is known for certain about the conflict that took place in the Signus system. Previous treatise regarding those events have provided few facts and much conjecture, most often driven by the need of the new Council of Terra to maintain the righteousness of their cause and to vilify those who fought against them, even at the expense of truth. In addition to this paucity of evidence, some effort appears to have been taken by members of the IXth Legion to expunge certain details of the campaign, and only the sigil and warrant of the Imperial Court borne by the author has served to open certain avenues of investigation. With the passing of Sanguinius during the defence of Terra, the IXth Legion has become notably reclusive, yet some among that brotherhood have been convinced to share their recollections, as have a number of those scant few survivors among the citizens of lost Signus.

Even with such measures, much of the recorded knowledge we have is contradictory or so fanciful that few consider it to be reliable. Even authentic battle-picts taken from Legiones Astartes battle plate and vehicles have been shown to bear conflicting versions of events, no doubt an artefact of the Warp's influence upon Signus and those that fought there. Indeed, even the exact time in which the battle occurred is in doubt, as the Blood Angels were known to have departed for the Signus system in early 005.M31 but did not reappear until 010.M31. Due to these complications, your author has been forced to make some concessions in the compilation of this volume to the paucity or unreliability of the information available. However, all possible effort has been made to verify and check what we have committed to history here. Where accounts differ or contradict established information, we have chosen to follow the chronicle of events logged by Magos Domina Shurol of the Legio Cybernetica, attached to the Blood Angels Legion, whose partially augmented cortex appears to have been little affected by the Warp's corruption.

A Hidden Flaw

The emissaries chosen by Horus to bear his words were themselves an oddity, for rather than astropathic courier or a detachment of his own Sons of Horus, the Warmaster had sent the Word Bearers, Lorgar's fervent crusaders, with his missive. Arriving shortly after the final battles within the Kayvas system, the warriors of the XVIIth Legion, led by one Praetor Kreed, presented Sanguinius with the Warmaster's orders. Horus bid his brother gather as many of the fragments of his Legion as possible and make for the distant Signus system, there to put an end to a xenos assault on that Imperial territory. It was exactly what many within the Legion had hoped for, a chance for open battle and glory, and although some chafed at the need to travel so far to liberate a single borderlands system, the fleet rejoiced to be sent once more to a war worthy of their might.

Only Sanguinius hesitated, for Horus' orders committed them to the wholesale slaughter of the foe, rather than the rescue of its citizens – a task which to the Angel seemed more fitting for other Legions. It was uncommon for the Great Crusade's commander to dictate the terms of a Primarch's war in such a fashion, as in those years when the Emperor had walked among His sons, the Primarchs had led their Legions where they saw fit, seeking out those battles that best used their skills or best served the good of the Great Crusade. It was, however, far from unprecedented, as Horus established himself in his new role he had issued a number of such orders – sending the White Scars to Chondax, ordering the Ultramarines to muster at Calth and dispatching the Dark Angels out past the Eastern Fringe. Just as his other brothers had, Sanguinius bowed before the Warmaster's wishes, putting aside his concerns over the use of his Legion in respect for his brother and commander.

There also was another factor at play which served to bind Sanguinius to the Warmaster's wishes, one which has long been hidden and kept from official accounts of these events. The Blood Angels had been beset by a genetic flaw, a creeping degeneracy brought on by extreme trauma or exposure to toxic conditions that induced a state that allowed the afflicted to survive even the most crippling wounds or conditions, but also kindled within them a mindless rage and lust for blood. Sanguinius and his senior officers had long concealed this flaw while they sought a means to correct its effects upon the Legion, going so far as to falsify rosters of the fallen and modify the tithe of genetic material dispatched to distant Terra. Horus was one of the few souls outside of the Blood Angels Legion to know of this flaw, having uncovered the secret during their Primarchs' joint campaign on Melchior, and pledged his own silence and aid in the search for a cure.

In the Warmaster, Sanguinius felt he had found an ally against the darkness that encroached upon his Legion, for he had little reason to distrust him. Yet Horus, and those of his dark allies that he had revealed this secret to, now intended to turn both the Legion's pride and this hidden flaw against them, to bring about exactly that which Sanguinius sought to avoid. Erebus of the Word Bearers planned to make use of its influence, magnified by the Warp-magicks at work in the Signus system, to force the Blood Angels, and most especially their Primarch, to the service of Horus and the dark gods that were his patrons. However, Horus, twisted by the powers he believed he controlled and his own jealousy, worked to subvert this plan, using his Davinite servants to arrange a different end for Sanguinius. He proffered a sliver of hope to the Primarch of the IXth Legion, claiming that the xenos responsible for the loss of Signus possessed some technological secret that might serve to alleviate their gene-flaw and reminding the Angel of the vow Horus had made to assist him. In the light of such a possibility, and through his misplaced trust in the Warmaster, Sanguinius banished his doubt and began to set his plans.

The Fleet Assembles

The first step in this was the gathering of his dispersed Legion. The call was sent out to those fleets that could be easily reached, summoning them to assemble alongside the flagship, the *Red Tear*. Such a gathering of the Legion had not occurred for many years and all of the far flung fleets of the Blood Angels were eager to join the great undertaking that Horus had given to the Angel, proud to once again demonstrate their skills to the Imperium and the Warmaster. In short order, Sanguinius had assembled some four fifths of his Legion, perhaps more than 100,000 warriors, along with those support units that had long served alongside it. This left out only 20,000 Legionaries, which comprised the garrisons of Baal, Saiph and Canopus IV, and units operating as part of fleets too far off to easily recall. In addition to his own warriors and those trusted allies, Sanguinius was also granted the service of Praetor Kreed and the company of Word Bearers garrisoned aboard the *Dark Page*, as emissaries of the Warmaster.

Though rarely assigned to campaigns alongside each other, the Blood Angels held the memory of the Word Bearers' censure at Monarchia as a black mark against the grey-clad warriors, one that might somehow transfer itself to them simply by association. It is noted in the logs of the *Red Tear*, which operated as the combined fleet's command vessel, that Praetor Kreed was rarely invited to attend the Angel or his strategic planning sessions during the voyage. No doubt this subtle insult served the purposes of Kreed and his warriors well, as he was fully aware of what awaited at Signus and kept both the changed troops under his command and his own motives well concealed from the scrutiny of Sanguinius. The Word Bearers were not the only outsiders to be included in the fleet, for a number of swift courier ships were to intercept the Blood Angels before the final departure to Signus.

First among these was a cruiser bearing a Stormbird emblazoned with the totemic insignia of the VIth Legion, the Space

Historia Terra Requem

The Serpent's Coils

The Kayvas campaign is itself something of a mystery, both in the manner of its undertaking and the actual goal of the conflict. Ostensibly, the mission undertaken by the Alpha Legion was a simple one; to eradicate those remnants of the Ork hordes of Ullanor that had fled to the asteroid belts of Kayvas. The task had originally been assigned to a Sons of Horus fleet, but reassignment to an expedition to the galactic north after their losses on Murder and in fighting against the Interex forced a reassignment of the campaign to the Alpha Legion, under the command of Alpharius himself. Divisio Militaris data shows that Alpharius had initially set a duration of five years for the completion of his goals, a length of time that in retrospect seems excessive for the scope of the operation. This choice was to see a secondary force assigned to the campaign to expedite the completion of its strategic goals, with the nearest available reinforcements being Sanguinius and the *Red Tear's* fleet.

Given our current knowledge of Horus' goals and plans, we know that the Alpha Legion had by this point already pledged loyalty to the Warmaster's treachery. They had committed forces to prepare both the Chondax and Alaxxes systems for diversionary and containment operations aimed at loyal Legions, and were among the first to openly take Horus' side in the fighting. It may well be that Kayvas was another such operation. If so, its goal would seem to be to hold the master of the IXth Legion in place until Horus' plans in Signus had reached fruition and he was ready to enact their final stage. When reviewing the Kayvas conflict, many otherwise aberrant facts would seem to support this theory, especially in conjunction with the presence of the Alpha Legion. Given the long-acknowledged strategic genius of the Warmaster, such meticulous planning is to be expected, with much of it enacted well in advance of the events at Isstvan.

Plans within Plans

With the seal of Horus, Warmaster of the Imperium, to accompany the orders they had received from Sanguinius, the various commanders of the IXth Legion abruptly removed their warriors from a number of ongoing war zones to join Sanguinius' fleet. This was to lead to several other Legions being forced to shoulder additional duties in the prosecution of those conquests assigned to them, several of which were to gutter on for far longer than anticipated by the Divisio Militaris and see reserve troops assigned to a number of distant systems to assist beleaguered Great Crusade fleets.

In the Inconnu system, the withdrawal of Blood Angels elements operating from the heavy cruiser *Redeemer* left the Raven Guard detachment on the surface lacking in troops dedicated to a heavy assault role, and saw the sons of Corax suffer casualties one third higher than projected in the completion of the campaign. On Balhaut, the Imperial Fists commander of siege operations issued an official protest over the sudden withdrawal of the *Golden Chalice* and its experienced orbital drop detachments, citing a potential increase in required time to bring the siege to a close and a significant decrease in operational efficiency. In all cases, the Warmaster's influence was more than enough to silence any outcry. Indeed, in retrospect, Horus seems to have benefitted greatly from the confusion it caused among those Legions that would later oppose him.

Wolves. This unexpected delegation from Russ' ill-omened Legion was received by Sanguinius with guarded hospitality, for a visitation by the grim sons of Fenris was rarely an occasion for celebration. Their reputation as the Emperor's executioners was well-founded, for it was to the Wolves of the VIth Legion that the Court of Terra turned when they wished to make plain their displeasure to both enemies and allies alike. Indeed, though Sanguinius and his sons had not yet received word, the remainder of the Space Wolves were already en route to Prospero to enact the Emperor's writ of censure upon the home world of the Thousand Sons and the warriors of Magnus. This fact was one item among many that the Space Wolves chose to withhold from the Great Angel and his sons when they arrived, their commander, then Helik Redknife, disclosing only that they were assigned to the fleet as observers by direct order of Malcador the Sigillite, and issuing orders that kept his men sequestered aboard their Stormbird, save for his honour guard and Wolf Priest advisor.

Alongside the warriors of Russ were other guests from the Courts of Terra, the last of the cruisers bringing a Prefect of the Legio Custodes and a handful of his brethren. Kalimak Sebran bore the title Vindex-minor, marking him as an assassin and swordsman of the Ephoroi of Terra, and as with all of the warriors of the Legio Custodes, he carried with him the Emperor's countenance. Ostensibly, he acted as the sponsor and guardian of the newest batch of Remembrancers, though few among the Blood Angels saw such an assignment as fitting for one of the Emperor's own life-guard. However, Prefect Sebran and his brothers were but a tiny drop amid the ocean of warriors that comprised the great fleet being assembled, and with a skill mastered over centuries by the Ephoroi, they quickly vanished into that morass. Only a few reports from among the gathered Blood Angels companies speak of these golden-armoured sentinels, often alongside mention of the warriors of Fenris, for both of these groups were treated as outsiders, respected but apart from the Blood Angels. Where they passed, the sons of Sanguinius drew tight the mask of stoic propriety they wore around strangers, hid the small rituals of their covenant and stifled talk of trials past and yet to come.

All of these disparate elements were gathered at the Warp transfer point near the pulsar Krzemin, where the fleet could easily translate to the aetheric tides that fed traffic to the far reaches of the galactic east. Within three short months of Horus' summons, the fleet was fully assembled and made ready for the transition, the long journey requiring no less than eight separate treks through the veil of the Warp. The planning required to maintain fleet cohesion during travel and to avoid significant deviation from both spatial and chronological targets was no small task, and taxed the veteran Navigators of the fleet to their limits. The records of the *Red Tear's* command crew note that the word was given for the commencement of the Signus campaign by Lord Sanguinius on 327005.M31, and the vast fleet slipped into the Warp, not to be seen again within the borders of the Imperium for five long years.

The Mysteries of Signus

The journey through the aether would last for some nine standard Terran months, significantly less than the initial estimates provided by the fleet's Navigators. Along its path, the Blood Angels armada emerged briefly from the Warp at several points, both to secure supplies and perform critical maintenance, as well as to take new positional readings and update their stellar charts. The final stop before their arrival at Signus was the largely unimportant system of Ankaror, where the squadrons and battle groups of the armada broke free of the immaterium and began the complex process of reforming the fleet in full battle order. As they expected to find themselves in swift confrontation with a xenos fleet upon arriving in Signus, it was deemed prudent to set their formation in the calm of real-space, rather then attempt such a manoeuvre in the depths of the Warp. Once drawn up in the complex formation formulated by the shipmasters and strategoi of the armada, Sanguinius ordered them onto the final warp jump into the Signus system itself. What they found was not the system they had expected to find, not the thriving Signus shown on star charts, nor the war-wracked battlefield that Horus had described; instead they found a graveyard.

As the Blood Angels squadrons tore free of the churning sea of the aether and into the cold, empty space of Signus, they found no enemy fleet waiting for them. Instead, there was a silent armada of the dead, a drifting cloud of freighters, cargo barques and short-range shuttles, all with their engines burned out and devoid of power, their crew lifeless and still. No damage from any known weapons system marked the hulls of these craft, no tell-tale marks of some desperate flight from an invader or valiant last stand. Instead, it seemed almost as though many had been ripped apart from the inside, or simply burst in the frozen reaches of the Signus system. The vast shoal of ship-corpses was all that remained of those inhabitants that had plotted a course out past the outer planet and pushed their primitive drives past any normal tolerance in what appeared to be a suicidal need to flee. Yet the augur banks of the *Red Tear* and its attendants could detect no sign of the terrible threat that must have sent them on such a flight, just corpses and the broken hiss of background radiation where there should be a cacophony of vox signals. Death had already come and gone in the Signus system, its fate decided long before Sanguinius had arrived.

The Signus Retribution Fleet

Assembled within a relatively short space of time due to the urgency of Horus' orders, the Signus Retribution fleet represents one of the largest single deployments of Legiones Astartes assets in the last years of the Great Crusade. In those years after Ullanor, the vast majority had employed only sub-Legion deployments, often of contingents of no more than 10,000 and often acting in close concert with larger deployments of the Imperial Army. Yet here Horus' orders recalled the glory of the early campaigns of the Great Crusade, where the Legions often operated as single formations to combat the terrifying power of the ancient xenos realms and fallen human empires that opposed the Emperor. It was perhaps the first clue of his intentions for Sanguinius and his sons, overlooked and ignored in those days when the treachery of a Primarch was still considered unthinkable.

The primary component of the fleet was the *Red Tear* and those ships attached to it as escort, forming what was at that time a standard Great Crusade fleet – perhaps 100 void craft of various marks and around 30,000-50,000 warriors of the Legion. It would be joined by the *Ignis* and the *Golden Chalice*, each accompanied by similar support contingents, bringing the fleet to its full strength.

Command Cadre

Sanguinius, Lord of the IXth Legion

Praetor Tanus Kreed of the XVIIth Legion

*Thegn Helik Redknife of the VIth Legion

*Prefect Kalimak Sebran, Vindex-minor of the Imperial Court

Archmagus Domina Erane Shurol, Mistress of the Capita Aquilae Battle Cohort

Fleet Assets

287 capital class void craft of the IXth Legion, including a disproportionate number of heavy cruisers and battleship class craft, with approximately 400 light strike craft and support ships.

A single cruiser of the XVIIth Legion, the *Dark Page*. This vessel acted as transport for all of the Word Bearers assets and their bonded auxilia, access to it was restricted for the entirety of the Signus campaign.

The Legio Cybernetica transport ark *Sigma-954*. Long a part of Sanguinius' fleet, the automata of the Capita Aquilae and their transport craft bore both the cog of the Mechanicum and the blood drop that signified the Angel's favour.

Legion Assets

Approximately 100,000 Legionaries of the IXth Legion: The Blood Angels, comprising fully 85% of the Legion, with some 3,000 left as garrison on Baal and another 10,000-15,000 operating in distant smaller garrisons, Great Crusade fleets and war zones.

*Approx. 45 Legionaries of the VIth Legion: The Space Wolves, comprising the huscarls of Redknife's company and support troops. Of these warriors, most remained secluded within their Stormbird after they arrived, with only Redknife's huscarls mixing freely.

Approx. 3,420 Legionaries of the XVIIth Legion: The Word Bearers 8th Company – the Unseen Hand.

Auxiliary Assets

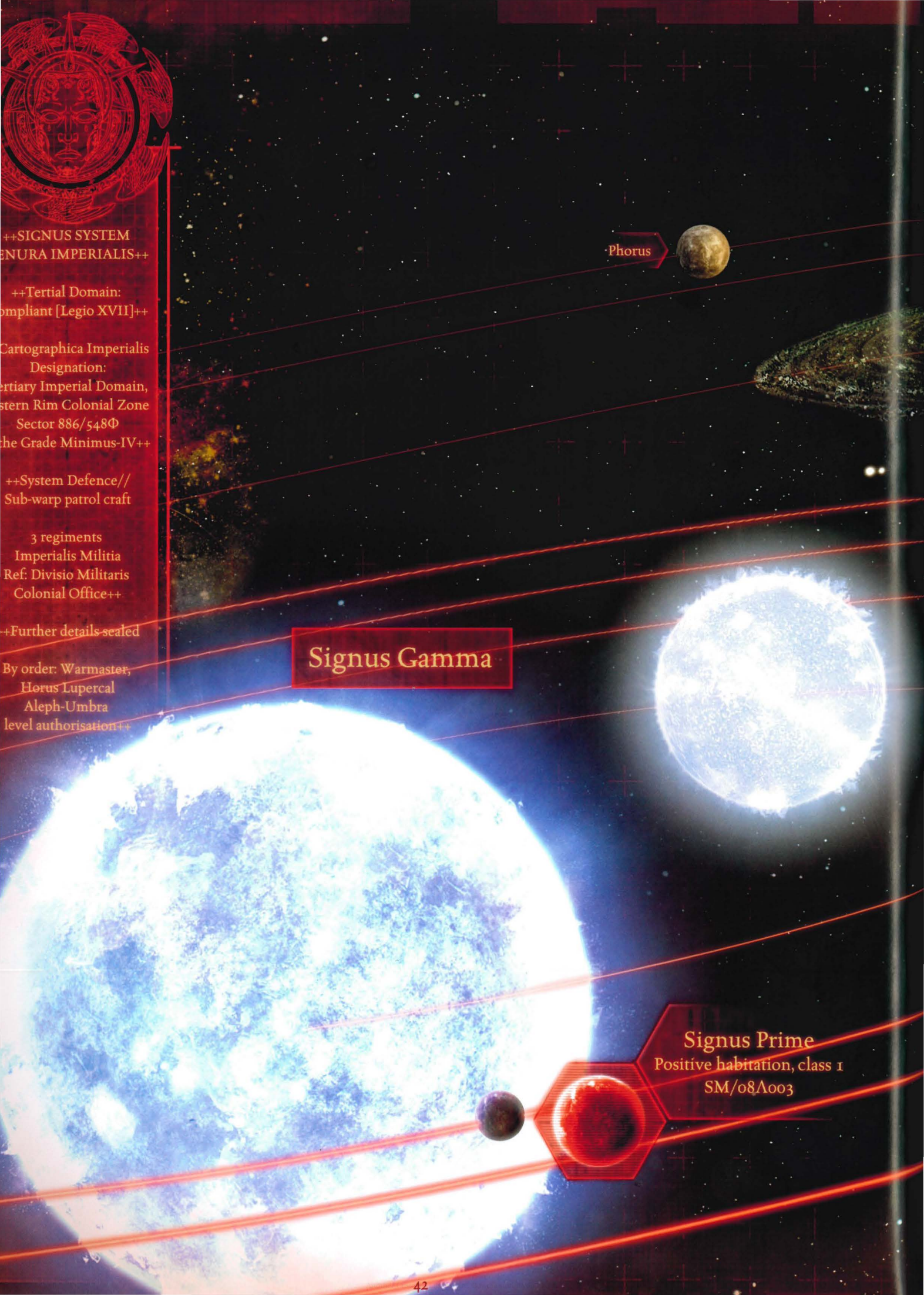
*36 Custodians of the Chamber Vigil Magna Viridium, comprising several squadrons of Equinox interceptors and Ephoroi Decapitor cadres.

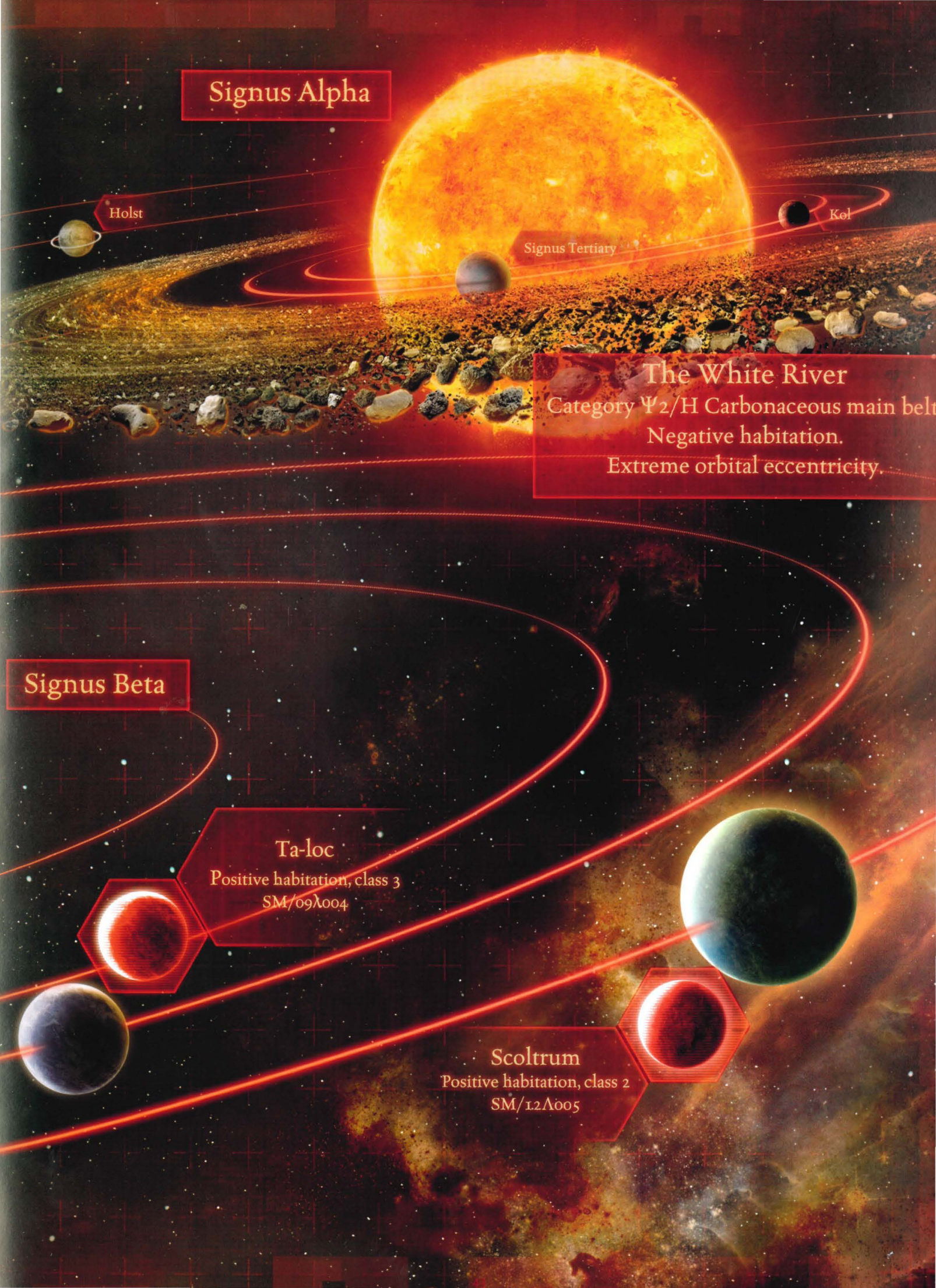
Two regiments of the Narthex Cull, Imperialis Militia troops bound in service to the XVIIth Legion. These troops remained secluded aboard the *Dark Page* until the fleet arrived at Signus Prime.

Fleet armsmen of the Blood Angels fleet, amounting to approximately three regiments of Imperialis Militia troops, armed primarily for close range engagement and security duties.

58 maniples of the Capita Aquilae Cohort of the Legio Cybernetica, the Eagle Skulls. These maniples were mainly formed of Castellax class automata with a significant force of Thanatar class automata acting as a combat reserve and mobile artillery force.

**Indicates units that were attached to the Red Tear's fleet after the arrival of orders borne by the emissary of the Warmaster, Praetor Kreed.*


++SIGNUS SYSTEM
ENURA IMPERIALIS++
++Tertial Domain:
ompliant [Legio XVII]++
Cartographica Imperialis
Designation:
ertiary Imperial Domain,
stern Rim Colonial Zone
Sector 886/548Φ
he Grade Minimus-IV++
++System Defence//
Sub-warp patrol craft
3 regiments
Imperialis Militia
Ref: Divisio Militaris
Colonial Office++
++Further details sealed
By order: Warmaster,
Horus Lupercal
Aleph-Umbra
level authorisation++
Phorus
Signus Gamma
Signus Prime
Positive habitation, class 1
SM/08Λ003


Signus Alpha
Holst
Kol
Signus Tertiary
The White River
Category Ψ2/H Carbonaceous main belt
Negative habitation.
Extreme orbital eccentricity.
Signus Beta
Ta-loc
Positive habitation, class 3
SM/09λ004
Scoltrum
Positive habitation, class 2
SM/12Λ005

The Slow Death of Signus

Signus' doom had been no sudden catastrophe, no swift end at the hands of a xenos warfleet. The Warmaster's machinations had sealed its fate long years before Sanguinius and his sons set foot there. From the data gathered from the few existing Blood Angels reports, the testimony of those few Signusi survivors and records captured from Traitor forces in the wake of the Battle of Terra, we can compile a fairly accurate assessment of the death of Signus.

Its first steps were undertaken in 933.M30, some 70 years before the Battle of Signus Prime and a decade after the destruction of Monarchia, with the initial Compliance action in the remote cluster of worlds designated as Ultima-XZ114. In an action fairly typical for the later conquests of the XVIIth Legion, the Word Bearers overran the few scattered human settlements and enforced a swift and brutal Compliance before moving on within a few short months, renaming the system Signus. This official history omits a number of facts, including the Word Bearers' sponsorship of the ongoing colonial effort, with a number of their client worlds providing some of the original re-population flotillas. The Primarch Lorgar is also known to have obstructed efforts by the Divisio Militaris and other branches of the Imperial Court in conducting census reports within the cluster, citing the danger to visiting dignitaries due to ongoing Great Crusade operations in neighbouring systems. This was all obfuscation to allow the Word Bearers to plant the seeds of various cults within the population, to see that the blueprints for newly laid cities and spires conformed to certain patterns of occult significance and that civilisation would grow and spread in a path they had set out.

These plans would not come to fruition until 004.M31, shortly after Horus' encounter on Davin. Here, the machinations of Lorgar and his acolytes found a dire new purpose in the corrupted desires of the Warmaster. It seems likely that once he was fully committed to his treachery, the death of Sanguinius was among the Warmaster's first and most important goals, a grudge that perhaps derailed other more strategic concerns, for much of his occult and materiel resource was swiftly turned to the preparation of Signus. Indications from the records kept by the Word Bearers show that they began large-scale incantations aimed at activating the hidden web of cults and arcane sigils embedded within the population and structure of the growing civilisation in the Signus cluster. This coincides with the first reports of aberrant phenomena within the Signus system, reports that were concealed by agents of the Warmaster, leaving Signus to descend into chaos alone and unaided. For months they suffered a series of disasters, unexplained deaths, rains of ash and blood, and the sudden appearance of violent cults. All intended to further the descent of the system into madness.

After several months, Horus made secret preparations for a task force to be sent to Signus, selecting a contingent of Davinite priests and warriors as well as a small cadre of his own Legion, to set the next stage of his plans into motion. These troops were to seize control of the governing bodies that remained within the Signus cluster and use their powers to accelerate the arcane processes of the Word Bearers' incantations. Here, records grow less accurate, and the testimony of survivors less intelligible. What is certain is that the population of Signus was systematically driven into madness and then converted to the worship of dark powers or harvested to provide the raw materials for the next stage of the system's transformation. The sheer scale of the terror and death unleashed is beyond easy comprehension, with billions of lives on seven worlds slowly and purposefully eradicated. The survivors speak of savage government purges and great internment camps from which none ever returned. Yet all the while the phenomena that plagued Signus only grew worse. Sudden epidemics claimed thousands of lives only to disappear within days, oceans once filled with life boiled, skies turned black with ash, and dread things were seen walking in the wild places.

Signus' final days are almost completely unrecorded. Those few who survived had already fled, but their testimony tells us that by this point no central government existed. The few remaining militia units looked to their own survival, many turning their guns on the civilians they had sworn to protect as they secured passage on ships, while others tried unsuccessfully to seize control of their worlds. Obscene cults ran wild through the cities and creatures that defied logic crawled and flew through the ruins of Signus' once proud civilisation. Worlds burned as planetary defence missiles were turned upon fallen cities, brief, bloody wars were fought to control the last spaceports, and no corner of the system was safe from the madness. Signus tore itself apart, alone and isolated in the darkness of the void, and no action of the Blood Angels Legion could have averted its fate.

Having emerged in the furthest regions of the Signus system, the Blood Angels' armada was far removed from Signus Prime, the system's throneworld, with the closest inhabited body being the cold world of Phorus. That frozen orb was the outermost world of the system, passing by the fleet in the long arc of its vast orbital track, and according to the charts possessed by the armada, it was home to 90,000 Imperial citizens. Leaving nothing to chance, Sanguinius ordered the fleet to approach Phorus at full combat alert. Organised in standard planetary assault formation, the lead squadrons closed with the silent planetoid, detecting no indicators of any surface or orbital activity, vox signals, active power sources or signs of movement. Probes launched from the closest warships returned even grimmer results. The surface of the planet had been scorched bare, all traces of life eradicated by some unknown force that had reversed decades of slow progress in reshaping Phorus' atmosphere and terrain to be more suitable to human habitation. Nothing remained but a blank orb of rock, a fact borne out by both the accounts of numerous ship masters and the cogitator banks of the ships of the fleet which recorded the results of both probe scans and long range augur investigation.

The events that followed were not captured with any accuracy by the fleet's augurs, and accounts taken from the various crew and passengers all differ in a number of critical details. Of the few facts that appear consistently in all accounts, the most disturbing is that the entire planet of Phorus began to follow the fleet as it passed by, presenting its southern polar region to the watching ships in full defiance of our

understanding of the heavens and their workings. This was not the only aberrant phenomenon to manifest on Phorus, various among those observing the planet report the appearance of vast fissures and cracks on its surface, others speak of patterns of light or colour in the thin atmosphere that remained and some of the extrusion of great cliffs and mesa, all aligning to form a pattern. None present could recall the exact symbol that marked the corpse of Phorus as it hung staring at them in the void, fewer still could bring that incident to mind without experiencing physical symptoms of pain and distress, but whatever its form, the abrupt shock it caused to the ships of the fleet is well-documented.

With the reactions aboard the ships of the fleet ranging from silent disbelief to violent panic, there existed a brief period of unrest across the armada. Order was swiftly restored, both by the reassurance of the various shipmasters and IXth Legion officers present, and by the intervention of the armsmen cadres aboard each ship. As such, the initial symptoms of a greater impossibility were missed, only recognised when ship-board alarms began to sound. All across the fleet, screens began to darken as the stars dimmed and went out, and all inter-system signals trailed away and failed. A dark veil settled across the Signus system, sealing it away from the rest of the galaxy, isolating Sanguinius and his sons from the greater Imperium. More even than their impossible encounter over Phorus, this sudden severance from the Imperium for which they fought must have shaken the Legion and most especially its dependents and servants. It left them stranded at Signus, to endure its trials alone, for none among the Blood Angels would consider abandoning the charge given them by the Warmaster's hand.

Those studying the Signus incident in these latter years have theorised that this unnatural shroud served not only to block light and vox waves, but also to interfere with the normal processes of time and space. Some theories even go so far as to posit that this veil, as the Blood Angels came to call it, was itself a pocket domain of the great aether, the Warp. The only craft spared from the armada to investigate the veil, the *Helios*, was reported lost with all hands shortly after contacting its boundaries some 6.3 light days past the edge of the system, yet another weight on the troubled mind of the Primarch Sanguinius and a loss that put an end to any further study of the phenomena. Yet it does prove that this was more than a sophisticated jamming field, some insubstantial cloak thrown over the system. This was a barrier of more substance and was capable of barring the passage of even the Imperium's star cruisers.

The Blood of Angels

Sanguinius and his sons were now alone, yet the Great Angel was loathe to abandon his mission, both in order to recover the secrets Horus had claimed were hidden in Signus as well as for the sake of any survivors that might yet exist on its scattered worlds. Forsaking the advice of more cautious officers, the winged Primarch ordered the armada deeper into the Signus system, towards the next planetoid, listed on the charts as Holst, a world home to numerous densely populated hive cities. On approach, Holst exhibited the same silence as Phorus, but it failed to react to the fleet's arrival, remaining quiescent and still even as dropships were launched into its atmosphere. However, what had been intended as a swift survey mission quickly became a massacre as, just as on Phorus, Holst began to manifest an increasingly disturbing array of macabre anomalies. The garbled reports submitted in the days after the encounter speak of hungry cities and ghosts of scrap and ash, of veteran Legiones Astartes warriors slaughtered, and vast silent metropoli where the dead lay in numbers beyond counting.

Of the 26 Legiones Astartes that descended to the surface, less than half returned, their extraction complicated by the sudden launch of waves of massive trans-atmospheric projectiles. These projectiles were apparently formed of matter somehow torn from Holst's crust, in a manner similar to the ancient defence systems of some Mechanicum worlds, most notably Mezoa. Yet, no mechanism or power source of sufficient complexity or sheer power existed on Holst that was capable of hefting multi-tonne chunks of rock and iron into orbit. Some among the fleet speculated that it was some aberrant natural occurrence, triggered by the hidden xenos forces they still believed present within the system, or caused by another cataclysm like that which had occurred on Phorus. However, such theories could not account for the obvious malice in the targeting of these projectiles, which appeared to be intended to cripple or destroy the squadron of cruisers holding station in low orbit. Of these ships, the *Paleknight* was struck head-on and destroyed by the impact of one such projectile, and the *Hermia* and *Victus* both reported heavy damage from near-misses.

Casualties for this small engagement were now in excess of several hundred of the Legiones Astartes and near a thousand auxiliaries and crew, and still there was no real sign of the foe to be seen. Forced once again to watch the suffering and death of those who had given him their trust, and mute and passive in the face of such impossibilities, Sanguinius gave vent to the cold fury that was growing within him. He gave one order in anger, one step towards the boiling red inferno he could feel building in his heart, one small gesture to assuage the guilt he felt for those he had ordered to their deaths at Holst. He called the Exterminatus Extremis down upon the accursed planet, or whatever it had become, and the guns of the assembled armada tore it apart.

The planet's destruction did little to settle the mood of the fleet or the Primarch. Indeed, with the continuing lack of any kind of organised resistance, Sanguinius fell to a brooding silence that quickly spread to those warriors who attended him and then across the Legion. Within the various assembled ship logs and daily reports can be seen a building frustration and malaise that set tempers on edge and betrayed a sullen belligerence among the Blood Angels. Small fights and angry outbursts erupted over the smallest grievance, all quickly stifled but telling nonetheless. Among the merely human crewmen of the fleet, the effect was even more pronounced, with fatal altercations and even suicides becoming a daily occurrence on most ships.

Unanswered Questions

On the inner worlds of Scoltrum and Ta-loc, the Blood Angels sought answers and a chance for the building anger to find release granted. Having transited in good order from the sparsely populated outer system to the inner worlds, where the centres of Signusi civilisation should have been found, Sanguinius authorised expeditions to both Scoltrum and Ta-loc. According to the charts held by the Divisio Militaris and stored within the cogitator vaults of the fleet, Scoltrum and Ta-loc both played host to millions of Imperial settlers and boasted advanced civil infrastructure for borderlands colony worlds. Given the continuing lack of any augur contacts or vox intercept, either in space or on the surface, the Great Angel surmised his foe to either be in hiding or otherwise concealed, and as such set out to organise a reconnaissance in force. Before they began operations upon Signus Prime, two forces would investigate the other inner worlds, forces large enough to hold against counter-attack, but small enough to move quickly and quietly.

To Scoltrum, Sanguinius dispatched the 24th Company of his Blood Angels, under Archein Nakir and supported by several maniples of battle-automata, all embarked on the light cruiser *Alastor*. The 24th was at full strength, fully 500 battle brothers and support cohorts, and well-used to acting in concert with the bonded automata of the Capita Aquilae, lacking only in heavy armour. It was a unit well-suited to a swift, disciplined insertion in uncertain terrain and against an unknown foe, commanded by a veteran captain in whom Sanguinius could place his confidence. Keen to further investigate the bizarre phenomena that they had observed elsewhere in Signus, Magos Domina Shurol also accompanied the expedition, along with a cadre of specially augmented archival servitors.

The initial stages of the Scoltrum operation went ahead without incident, the task force proceeding the main fleet to its objectives accompanied by only a few of the fastest cruisers available. The shipmasters had explicit orders to retreat from combat should they encounter any aberrant phenomena on a planetary scale, as had been observed on Phorus and Holst, at which point the Great Angel would unleash the full firepower of his armada. However, it seemed that such measures would be unnecessary as Scoltrum showed no sign of manifesting corruption on that scale, although it bore the marks of battle and death. Vast fires raged across much of its surface, its cities were in ruins and vast agri-cantonments were abandoned and rotten. The approaching Blood Angels ships could detect few signs of life, with a solitary distress beacon the sole sign of any Imperial survivors.

The wreck of the system defence frigate *Stark Dagger* proved to be the source of the distress beacon on Scoltrum. The broken carcass of the void ship was scattered across the western continent's vast harvest plains, mostly as small unidentifiable chunks of charred metal. Three sections of the ship, its prow, stern and a large portion of the middle decks had retained some amount of integrity during the crash, enough that a small chance

they might shelter survivors existed. Of those three, the stern had made planetfall in the ocean and the mid-decks had suffered by far the most damage during the descent, while the prow section's massive armoured sheath had absorbed much of the impact of its crash. Archein Nakir took personal charge of the main body of the 24th, leading the investigation of the prow section which was the origin point of the distress beacon, while Archmagus Domina Shurol and the battle-automata under her command were detailed to cordon the secondary site at the mid-ships section.

Despite the catastrophic damage that had been wrought upon the wreck of the *Stark Dagger*, the marks of which resembled no known xenos or Imperium weapons system, the Blood Angels found a small band of survivors sealed within the depths of the ruined prow. This discovery coincided with the first confirmed encounter with enemy forces in the Signus system. A heavily distorted vox report confirmed the kill of an unidentified xenos warform by a battle brother from the 24th's Breacher cadre, assigned to the security of the dropship landing zones. This report is quickly followed by several assaults on the landing craft by forces of unknown origin, each repulsed with losses. The enemy appeared almost from thin air, with no trace of their method of insertion to the combat zone being found, despite the initial reconnaissance teams finding no evidence of enemy activity. Within little more than minutes, every unit of Archein Nakir's task force was heavily engaged, except for the battle-automata, which found themselves virtually ignored by the foe.

Despite the Blood Angels being heavily engaged for over an hour as they executed a tactical withdrawal to their landing zones with the rescued civilians, there remain only fragmentary pict recordings of the enemy. Those battle-brothers of the 24th who made note of their encounters logged a variety of often contradictory descriptions of the foe, most bearing no relation to known xenos breeds, but instead recalled the ancient myths of Old Terra from before the days of the Emperor and His Imperial Truth. Magos Domina Shurol, whose combat-automata had seemingly been purposefully avoided by the enemy, had chosen to undertake a more immediate investigation of the foe, deeming that more strategically important than any tactical imperative to support the beleaguered Blood Angels defence. However, despite the plethora of recording and augury devices available to the automata of the Capita Aquilae, little verifiable data was captured. Just as these creatures defied the capabilities of mortal senses to fully encompass, so too did they confound the logic of the Mechanicum and its servants. The only certain conclusion that the Magos Domina could reach was that the artificial nature of her warriors seemed somehow unpalatable to the enemy, though the automata were no less effective in the bloody maelstrom of battle.

Shattered Hopes

Unlike its more terrestrial cousin, Ta-loc was largely covered by shallow oceans and had a far less concentrated population. Here the Great Angel chose to entrust the mission to elements of the 11th and 94th Companies, under the command of Archein Maulgrehn. A recent recruit inducted after the Aleph Carinae campaign, Maulgrehn was considered a favourite of the Great Angel and a rising star among the Legion, and the 11th Company was renowned for its long and prestigious list of battle honours. By contrast, the 94th Company currently lacked a captain, Archein Malaci having fallen in combat during the Inconnu campaign, was known primarily for the casualties it often sustained, its combat strategies bearing much in keeping with the old IXth Legion as befitted the large numbers of Terran and Canopian veterans within its ranks. However, the large proportion of reconnaissance and stalker units within the 94th made it ideal for the task at hand.

Events on Ta-loc were to follow a similar pattern on Scoltrum. When the chosen warriors of the 11th and 94th grounded, there was no sign of enemy activity, only debris long since settled and the cold remains of a ruin that had encompassed the entire world in short order and left little behind. Assured in his mind of an easy success under the direct gaze of his Primarch, Archein Maulgrehn directed the elements of the 94th Company seconded to his command to a wide survey of the half-submerged ruins of Ta-loc's once prosperous cities, while he led the veteran warriors of the 11th into the single spire that continued to show faint signs of activity in its waterlogged depths. The readings detected from the surface were soon found to be little more than sensor ghosts and vox-echoes, a discovery that once again coincided with the sudden appearance of the enemy. As on Scoltrum, the creatures that fell upon the elite of the 11th appeared as if from nowhere, breaching defence cordons and secure bulkheads as if they were not there.

In the madness that followed, Archein Maulgrehn and the warriors of the 11th Company were forced into a harrowing withdrawal. Trapped some 40 storeys below ground level, with every stairwell and passage way choked with aberrant monstrosities all intent on the death of the Blood Angels, the 11th closed ranks and drew combat blades. With little idea of the situation on the surface, the 11th were obliged to fight corridor by corridor to force a path back to the surface, with each metre of progress bought with the blood of their battle-brothers. Eight hours passed before they emerged once again, the surface landing zones all but overrun by hordes of flying bat-like creatures and few Legionaries of the 11th had more than a handful of rounds of ammunition remaining. In short order, the survivors were extracted from the surface and the cruisers in orbit enacted a localised bombardment to annihilate the foe, although pict-records of the surface after the bombardment cannot confirm any casualties.

In the wake of the engagement, Archein Maulgrehn, whose reputation was tarnished by the outcome of the fighting, made much of the failure of the 94th and Centurion Aster Crohne to provide adequate warning of the enemy's approach or to secure the entrances of the spire. However, this discounts both the unexplained ability of their enemy to appear without need to approach the zone of conflict in a traditional manner, as well as the tenacious defence the 94th made of the landing zones, holding them long enough to evacuate both detachments. Regardless, the situation was such that few within the Blood Angels First Sphere or the Primarch's entourage made comment on the conduct of either officer, but the accusations only added to the growing sense of discontent and anger within the ranks of the Legion. Despite the efforts of the Legion and their Primarch, they had managed little more than the rescue of a mere handful of survivors from a solar system once home to billions. Worse still, there was precious little solid information available regarding their foe, either in terms of their numbers, capabilities or even objectives.

A Dark Sojourn

The situation among the ships of the fleet was beginning to reach a critical point. The complete lack of communication with the greater Imperium, spreading rumours of the impossible terrors discovered by the Blood Angels and the unseen but crushing malaise preyed on each and every member of the fleet, save perhaps the combat-automata of

the Mechanicum. Taken individually, these were all little more than nuisances, but combined with the continuing failure of the fleet to even locate the foe and the terrifying silence of the Great Angel, to whom even the meanest naval rating looked to for hope, they constituted the gravest threat to Sanguinius' mission yet encountered. Yet the Primarch remained secluded within his sanctum aboard the *Red Tear* as he sought to divine the truth that would turn the campaign in his favour, and his sons and followers were left to make what sense they could of the dire situation they faced.

Many chose, as had the Primarch, to pursue what few fragments of information they had in order to understand the abnormal situation in the Signus system. Aboard the vast Mechanicum war-ark *Sigma 954*, Magos Domina Shurol documented the effects of the system's bizarre phenomena on the servitors that crewed her ship, striving to isolate a cause and potential counter-agent through bloody dissections and cortical realignment. The great commanders and strategists of the Blood Angels, numbered among the finest in the Imperium, strove to discern a pattern in the enemy's actions, to guess at its intentions and plans. Yet even such renown warriors as Raldoron, First Captain of the Legion, and Elai Jannus of the 202nd Company, sometimes known as the Crimson Oracle for his strategic insight, found no hint as to what the Blood Angels might expect to encounter as they pressed forwards.

Others took a more direct approach to the fugue that spread throughout the fleet. Amit and the warriors of the 5th Company took to the practise cages and drilled incessantly, their anger a potent foil to the numbing fear that took others. Sebastor Maulgrehn and those held up by the Legion as exemplars of honour took to the open places of the fleet's ships, there to proclaim the righteousness of their cause and to stand as bright bulwarks of hope in these dark times, while others whose talents predisposed them to other avenues of investigation sought more secluded places for their efforts. The decommissioned adepts of the now defunct Blood Angels Librarius sought each other out in secret and spoke of the fel dreams that haunted them, while Aster Crohne of the 94th and others of the Judiciar and Moritat Orders prowled the less frequented decks in search of infiltrators and spies.

None would find answers, and the Great Angel was left with little choice but to advance the fleet upon Signus Prime. Once the throneworld of the system, and likely the centre of any xenos occupation, it was here, if anywhere, that answers awaited them, though with so little information regarding the foe it was likely to be an encounter that ill-favoured the forces of the Imperium. However, to delay and seek answers elsewhere before assaulting the foe's stronghold risked a slow bleeding of the fleet's ability to fight, for while the Legiones Astartes of the Blood Angels, Space Wolves and Word Bearers remained combat capable, the merely human crewmen of the fleet suffered and failed with each day that passed. Faced with the ever-growing list of suicides, injuries and mechanical failures, Sanguinius called together the lords of the Three Hundred Companies and gave the word. The grand armada of the IXth Legion massed past the orbit of Ta-loc and began the long in-system burn towards Signus Prime.

The Eye of the Storm

Once a bright and majestic world, the centre of the massive effort to colonise and develop the Signus system out on the fringes of Imperium space, the Signus Prime sighted by the sleek scout cruisers that ran ahead of the main Blood Angels armada was almost unrecognisable. Images collected from long-range augur scans and gun camera picts showed a pus-yellow orb, smothered in thick storm clouds that moved in patterns that defied any known pattern of meteorology. More disturbing yet, both of the moons that had once orbited the third planet of the Signus system were gone. At first, the augur crews had assumed that the vast rings of debris detected shrouding the lower orbits of Signus Prime comprised the remains of those celestial bodies, but closer scans revealed the true source of the twisted wreckage that littered the space above Signus Prime. It was the remains of the Signus defence fleets as well as that of the various orbital stations that had once held position in the skies of that world. Many of the wrecks were little more than scattered metal shards, and the drifting flash-frozen, incomplete corpses were all that remained of their crew, the casualties of the last bitter defence of Signus Prime, fought alone and isolated long before Sanguinius had even heard of the Signus system.

No signal of any kind emanated from the surface, where once nearly three billion Imperial citizens had dwelt in newly-seeded hive cities and sprawling farming enclaves. It was silent and dead, and had been since long before the Blood Angels had arrived within the bounds of the system. Horus had sent them to save a living system under siege by a known enemy, and yet in all of Signus, from its furthest reaches to what should have been its beating heart, they had found little trace of either its citizens or its besiegers. Every sign pointed to the fate of Signus having long since been decided, which led to one overriding question: had the Warmaster deliberately sent them to a dead and abandoned system, and if so, why? Or had Horus been deceived himself or simply misinformed as to the state of the Signus system?

Sanguinius had pledged his loyalty to the Warmaster, without reservation or any trace of envy for his elevation as first among the Primarchs. The idea that Horus might purposefully seek to trap him and his Legion, to see harm of some kind brought to them for the sole purpose of their diminishment or destruction must have been abhorrent to him. Had Horus asked Sanguinius to sacrifice his blood or his sons in the name of the Emperor and the Great Crusade, it is likely that the Great Angel would have marched into the fires of destruction willingly, satisfied that his suffering was justified. Likely, even at this late hour, with the dire fate of the inhabitants of Signus writ clearly before him, Sanguinius resisted the growing sense that he had been betrayed. With the inscrutable warp-veil still blocking all astropathic communication, he had no means to confront his brother, no means to voice the questions that must have tormented him. Sanguinius, as a leader who prided himself on his integrity and honour, could not abandon his oaths of loyalty.

As the great armada of the IXth Legion hung in high orbit of Signus Prime, with its Primarch distracted by the implications of their orders, the fate of Signus and the intentions of the Warmaster, a new tragedy befell the Legion. Emanating from a hidden location beneath the murk that shrouded the planet below, somehow bypassing the encryption seals that warded the Blood Angels vox network, a wordless shriek of inhuman horror assailed the crews of the fleet. Spilling from vox grilles, cogitator consoles and even autonomous servitor units, the piercing wail was heard by every soul aboard the vessels, though none of the recording equipment built into those systems bears any trace of it. From the bridge crews ensconced on airy battleship control pulpits, to the naval ratings consigned to duty in the hermetically sealed reactor compartments, the entire complement convulsed in pain and shock at the sound. Drawn now into the heart

of the darkness that dwelt in Signus, the very centre of the vast trap set for them, the Blood Angels felt the sting of hubris as the enemy struck at them with impunity. The true battle for Signus and the IXth Legion was about to begin.

War in the Heavens

The crimson ships of the Blood Angels rang with the anguished cries of those the Legiones Astartes had sworn to protect, while the Blood Angels stood by impotent. Records from the various medicae bays of the fleet list that in total a small percentage of the human crew scattered across the Blood Angels' ships, perhaps 50,000 men and women, died at the moment the shriek washed over the armada. Of those that survived the initial shock, many were left stricken by cerebral haemorrhaging or sudden crippling amnesia and slumped silently at their stations, while others were driven insane by the psychic wave unleashed upon them. All of the fear, doubt and uncertainty that had been inflicted upon them by the graveyard of Signus was set loose, almost as if by some prearranged psychic trigger, and chaos reigned aboard the ships of the fleet. On some vessels, mobs of deranged crew set upon their stations smashing and tearing at the delicate equipment, on others they engaged in frenzied melees with any they encountered, while a few were even engulfed by full-fledged mutiny.

The Space Marine contingents on each ship struggled to maintain order, for the Legiones Astartes, while superlative warriors and conquerors, were ill-suited to police actions. The Blood Angels in particular, schooled by Sanguinius to place great value on the lives of those that served alongside them, found themselves in an invidious position. They could fall under attack at any moment and while the crew ran riot, they were helpless in the face of the enemy. The fastest method of restoring order would have been to use force to quell the more violent outbursts of rage and panic, a method other Legions, such as Perturabo's IVth, would not have hesitated to employ. Indeed, on a few of the ships some commanders of the IXth Legion did call their warriors to arms. On the *Fulgent Dawn*, Archein Maulgrehn ordered the 11th Company to secure the bridge decks in the face of an angry mob of naval ratings, and although the ship was kept at battlestations throughout the crisis, 111 crewmen were killed as a result of the order. Even on the *Red Tear*, where Sanguinius had set his flag, there were a number of crew casualties and even some injuries among the Blood Angels from what were listed as '*containment actions*' in sections of the ship worst hit by the effects of the malignant sound.

Few ships were unaffected, the *Infernal Djinn* registered no casualties during this period from internal action, but lost 18 crewmen after its bridge crew were all rendered catatonic and the frigate collided with the cruiser *Magna Veridia*. Aboard the heavy cruiser *Ifrit Nine*, the constant recitation of the *Liturgy of the Blood* by Archein Elai Jannus of the 202nd Company, broadcast ship-wide at maximum gain, managed to quell the disorder

without bloodshed. Aboard the Mechanicum ark *Sigma-954*, only minor breakdowns among the lower grade deck servitors were noted, all quickly replaced by freshly activated units, although a brief tremor was noted in the battle-automata units' cortex scans while they slumbered in their rest cycles. The only ship to truly escape the effects of the psychic scream was the *Dark Page*, the Word Bearers vessel attached to the armada, which remained at full combat alert throughout the aftermath of the signal emanating from Signus Prime.

During the period of madness that engulfed his fleet, little was heard from Sanguinius. Official records of the campaign make no mention of the Primarch during this period, but private accounts indicate something of import occurred, more by what is omitted than by what is noted. The exacting records of the Keruvim, the Crimson Paladins that guard the Angel's halls and the core decks of the *Red Tear*, have a period of eighteen minutes excised from them corresponding to the height of the madness – an act that could only be undertaken at the direct order of the Primarch. The logs of the Seraphs, the Sanguinary Guard, also show a disturbance at around this time, during which the Angel is sealed within his sanctum with First Captain Raldoron, Azkaellon, First among the Ikisat, and three junior members of that Order. Archein Raldoron's own extensive writings on the Horus Heresy, a dry but exhaustive chronicle, are notably silent on this matter and his actions during the scream's aftermath.

Of what passed during those eighteen minutes there is next to nothing recorded, the Blood Angels themselves having expunged almost all logs regarding the incident from their own archives. The only hints as to what kept the Primarch contained and isolated as madness tore through his fleet are an excerpt from the updated security protocols of the Ikisat, as the eldest of the Blood Angels call the Sanguinary Guard, and an excerpt from a statement given by Captain Raldoron many years later. Immediately following the madness, the Ikisat, by direct order of Azkaellon, began limiting the number of servitor helots allowed within the Angel's sanctum to two in order to '*limit the mass available for aetheric intrusion*', a curious turn of phrase for the stoic Sanguinary Guard. The protocols also call for the inclusion of hexagrammatic wards as part of the sanctum's defences, a demand that skirts the edge of the Imperial Truth's proscriptions against superstition. These measures are more well known in these latter years, and are often used to secure small areas against Daemonic incursion. Such assumptions would seem to be confirmed by the words of Raldoron in 022.M31, where he is noted to have stated to the conclave of those one-time servants of Malcador, '*No fortress or sanctum is safe from the Daemon, I have seen that proved, at Signus by my Lord's side and at other, darker places besides.*' As no injuries are reported among any of those present for this incident, only the destruction of some six high grade servitors, it can be assumed that if this was a Daemonic incursion then it was not for the purpose of battle. Yet, it served to keep Sanguinius away from his sons at a critical moment, no doubt through the means of subtle lies and half-truths, though the exact words that passed between Sanguinius and the Daemonic intelligence cannot be known. Its effects upon the armada are more well-documented. Without the leadership of Sanguinius, each individual ship found itself isolated in the chaos, forced to quell the panic and violence that the aetheric scream evoked. This was a masterstroke of vindictive cunning, a strike at both that which the Blood Angels cherished and that which was their weakest point – the human crew sworn to their service, bound to them by oaths of loyalty, and made while Sanguinius himself was artfully distracted and unable to act in their defence.

The tight combat formation that they had assumed began to crumble as ships lost attitude control or, in a few cases, deliberately changed course, some to flee and some to fight. Here at their weakest moment the enemy finally showed its face. From among the debris field that now cloaked the poisoned orb of Signus Prime, a multitude of craft began to emerge, bursting forth from the dense belt like corpses from a freshly dug grave. Some, perhaps, had once been void craft from the Signus system defence flotilla, armour flayed away and reformed into crude mockeries of wings or grasping limbs and claws. Others were twisted conglomerations of rubble and debris, grasped by some unknown power and sculpted into crude mockeries of Imperium void ships. All were an impossibility, unable to exist according to the laws that Mankind believed governed the universe, and yet still they swooped and swam through the void seemingly eager to grapple with one of the most potent void-borne forces assembled by the servants of the Imperium. Those few crewmen still manning the sensor-augurs of their craft gazed upon a scene sprung from a nightmare, the hell that the Imperial Truth denied loosed upon them as they sat helpless. Here was the Daemon finally given form to oppose them in open battle where none could deny its presence, and even those whose strength of will had stood against the aetheric scream faltered at the sight of the foe that now descended upon them.

Historia Terra Rejuven

A Fracture in Time and Space

As the armada sank into chaos and the corpse-ships pulled themselves free of the debris field, all across the fleet the atomic chronometers that regulated shipboard time froze, an impossibility under the known laws of understood molecular physics, at a reading of 666666666.M31 and would not change until the Blood Angels finally departed the Signus system. Prior to this the last normal reading is 365329005.M31, and after leaving Signus every chronometer was found to read 688573009.M31, nearly five years later than it should, a reading later confirmed as true upon their arrival at Ultramar in 010.M31.

365329005.M31 marks the last point at which any of the internal augur readings from the ships of the armada can be considered reliable, as after this point all logs contain significant amounts of corrupted data and interference. Even the personal logs of the crew become difficult to interpret – many are incoherent or rambling, while others contradict each other in the most basic of details. Some key personnel are noted in different places at the same time, while others are notably absent. In at least nineteen cases, warriors of the Blood Angels known to have been dead for years are recorded as active in the combat zone. Clearly, some malign influence warped the perceptions of most of those present, in a way most reminiscent of the final battle of Prospero. Of all of the participants, only the Primarch Sanguinius, a few of his key officers and Magos Domina Shurol remained largely unaffected, and it is the testimony of these individuals which forms the basis for the final part of this treatise.

And Hell followed with Them

The corpse-fleet fell upon the scattered Blood Angels armada with gouts of unnatural flame, that burned even in the cold vacuum, and rending talons of bone and steel. Those ships that had drifted furthest from the fleet, or deliberately moved out of formation were among the first to fall prey to their assault. The *Crest of Fire*, its engine decks in the midst of a full scale riot, became the first vessel to fall, torn apart by flailing steel pseudopods and stone fangs, but it was not the last. In total, eight capital class ships and nearly a dozen small assault craft were destroyed before the Blood Angels were able to regroup. It is likely that the total would have been higher had the heavy cruiser *Ifrit Nine* not ploughed into the advancing wave of corpse-ships, using its sheer bulk to shield the recovering craft at the fringes of the armada. The *Ifrit Nine* withdrew under cover of the darkfire lances of the Mechanicum ark *Sigma-954*, whose servitor crew had remained at their stations, having suffered heavy damage and venting atmosphere from several decks.

However, the sacrifice of its crew and that of several other ships bought time for the fleet to regain control. Under immediate threat and witnessing the bravery of their allies, the Blood Angels and their bound helots quickly rallied. A lesser force would have been overwhelmed by the sheer ferocity of the enemy's onslaught, for the corpse-ships cared not at all for their own safety and only for the destruction of the foe before them, but even with their servants in chaos, the Legiones Astartes could not be broken by simple shock tactics. Key commanders on the largest and most powerful battleships brought their errant crews to heel by whatever means they deemed necessary, and anchored the defensive formations of the nearby squadrons. The *Red Tear*, *Covenant of Baal*, *Ignis*, *Golden Chalice* and other Ultima-grade capital ships brought their guns to bear on the oncoming horde, each a formidable fortress in the void that the lesser ships of the armada could rally to.

Gun batteries hammering out a curtain of destruction, the battleships of the armada broke the initial rush of their ghastly new enemy, debris from the destroyed corpse-ships so thick it began to form a second ring in high orbit around Signus Prime. Yet even such a toll as was reaped by the *Red Tear* and its massive kin could not stop the seemingly endless swarm of animate wrecks and impossible chimaera that assaulted them.

The lesser ships, the line cruisers and fast picket ships, were quickly tasked with point defence duties as they regained full control of their crews, setting up interlocking fields of fire to screen the battleships and those ships within their zones of engagement. Such complex three-dimensional naval tactics were second nature to the veteran crews of the IXth Legion, and the ingrained training and battle experience from years of warfare quickly supplanted the shock and terror that had overcome them. Beginning to regain the momentum as a unified fighting force, it seemed that the Blood Angels vessels would hold the line, their superior firepower keeping back the hordes of grasping corpse-ships. However, such simple thralls were far from the only weapon to be set against Sanguinius and certainly not the most deadly.

At the height of the battle, as the various ships of the fleet struggled to keep their sectors of the engagement clear of foes with only minimal able crew, the *Dark Page* quietly opened a hole in the complex defensive web that shielded the *Red Tear* at the formation's heart. This act of treachery went almost unnoticed amid the chaos of battle, and even in the aftermath many among the Blood Angels refused to accept that their brothers would turn on them and instead assumed some calamity had befallen the *Dark Page*, though later events would prove the perfidy of Lorgar's sons. Its guns silent and still, the *Dark Page* and her crew watched as daemonic hulks passed unmolested through the hole in the lines they had been assigned to defend. Fully engaged in the defence of their own sectors, most of the other craft in close proximity to the *Red Tear* could render little assistance, the only exception being the *Ifrit Nine*, whose main guns were still inoperable after its early sortie. Under orders of Archein Jannus, the *Ifrit Nine*'s engines flared as they moved to full burn, slamming the damaged heavy cruiser into the first of the *Red Tear*'s assailants, the two ships spiralling down into the grip of Signus Prime's gravity with IXth Legion saviour pods trailing in their wake. The second of the aggressors was shredded by the heavy guns of the *Red Tear*, but the third struck home, its hull flexing and splitting like the skin of a rotten fruit, clamping onto the *Red Tear*'s hull and disgorging the warped creatures within into the interior of the ship.

Battle raged across the lower decks of the *Red Tear*, which were infested with crawling horrors, while cruelly barbed nightmares walked the hallways leaving only butchered corpses in their wake. The Blood Angels' flagship played host to several thousand of the Legion's finest warriors, but these were scattered across the vast ship and only a few stood ready at the point of impact. It was by the brave sacrifice of those closest to the breach that the vessel was not overwhelmed immediately, allowing other detachments to reinforce the defences. Despite the valour of the warriors of the IXth Legion, casualties quickly began to mount as the Blood Angels struggled to clear the ship and still protect those trapped near the fighting. Several detachments, cut off and isolated in the crew compartments packed with the wounded, were saved only by the appearance of Custodes Ephoroi, whose fearsome martial skills turned the tide of the fighting. In the lower decks, it was the appearance of the Space Wolves of Thegn Redknife that sealed the breach. Standing as one, the disparate forces aboard the *Red Tear* turned back the Daemonic horde only to find a far more deadly blow had already been struck against them.

Even as warriors in red, gold and grey fought and died in the dark holds of the ship, it was the brightly-lit command deck that saw the most critical fighting. It was not a battle of blades and cannon, but instead one of wills. This clash of minds was no less deadly, and the great battleship's sudden plight tipped the balance against the Blood Angels and their servants. Though the Blood Angels have since taken measures to erase the name of the officer responsible, one among the command crew of the *Red Tear* fell into the grip of despair, slaughtered their comrades and destroyed the main control stack. Bereft of the control nexus that guided it, the *Red Tear* fell from orbit like a broken angel trailing wings of flame as it breached the atmosphere of Signus Prime. A lesser ship would have been torn apart by the grip of Signus Prime's gravity, but the *Red Tear* was one of the few surviving battleships of the Emperor's own fleet. Laid down in the orbital shipyards of Jupiter and augmented by the subtle arts of the Martian adepts, the ship far outmatched others of its class. Though the rigours of the descent blackened its hull and buckled the sheath of armour about it, the core compartments buried at its heart remained intact even as the bow of the great ship ploughed into the corrupted surface of Signus Prime.

The Birth of Curses and Legends

The conflict on and above Signus Prime had almost reached its climax. Sanguinius had been delivered into the heart of Lorgar's carefully constructed trap, isolated from the vast firepower of his armada and shown the vulnerability of his Legion. It only remained to enact the final part of Signus' destruction, to press the Blood Angels into a corner and release the dark potential that Lorgar and his allies saw within them, and yet some pieces remained out of place. In the skies above the battle still raged, the fall of the *Red Tear* had failed to break the Blood Angels and had instead galvanised the remaining ships to fight all the harder, while within the wreck of the *Red Tear* itself, Sanguinius and his sons still held to their convictions of an honourable victory. It would be the actions and changes made in this final battle that would decide the outcome of the entire campaign and perhaps of the Imperium itself.

Malcador's Black Watch

Helik Redknife and the small company under his command were a single facet of a larger gambit. Conceived by Malcador and the Primarch of the VIth Legion, Leman Russ, after the events on Prospero, this plan sought to place a force of the Space Wolves within striking distance of each remaining Primarch, ideally in a place of trust attached to their Legion. The orders given to these strike forces were simple – if their charge took action against the Imperium or the Great Crusade in violation of their oath of loyalty, then the watchers were to eliminate them by any and all means possible. This was an explicit order for the death of any given Primarch, as judged necessary by the VIth Legion officer in charge of the watch force, a contingency that if made common knowledge would likely lead to no small amount of dissent and as such, its full scope and detail remained secret.

The full and complete rosters of these so-called '*watch packs*' have remained sealed within the restricted archive-vaults beneath the Imperial Palace and as such any judgement on the effectiveness of this initiative is rendered moot. Some observers have noted that these forces often appeared to be little more than squad strength deployments, but this seems a futile gesture in the face of a Primarch's fury, not to mention the assembled force of his Legion. Such an understated response to the threat level presented by their targets is unlike the standard operating practices of the Space Wolves, and other sources speculate that the small watch packs were only the tip of the spear aimed at each of the Primarchs, with additional forces remaining within striking distance.

However, any debate regarding Malcador's and Russ' attempts to enforce the Primarchs' loyalty is made largely inconsequential by the obvious failure of the plan. Instituted on the very threshold of the Horus Heresy, while Horus' own plans were well-established, many of the watch packs failed to even reach their targets before the civil war was underway. Those who did rendezvous with the Legions they were assigned to were plainly unable to complete the missions assigned to them, for not one of the Traitor Primarchs is known to have been so much as injured by Leman Russ' hand-picked executioners. Indeed, those who arrived at the courts of the various Loyal Primarchs, such as the warriors assigned to Sanguinius, appear to have aided the Traitor cause more than their own by spreading discord and suspicion among the ranks of the Loyalist Legions.

The battle itself has long since been immortalised by the epic poem, *The Angel's Fall*, written by the Remembrancer Aleksandr Pontif in the years after the breaking of the Siege of Terra. The esteemed Remembrancer is said to have used testimony from the fallen Primarch's own writings, yet this fanciful account focuses far more on symbolism and portents than the deeds of the Great Angel. While these, now immortal, events are indeed pivotal to the fate of the battle and the Legion as a whole, they are not the entire story – for each Legion is far more than simply its Primarch. The fate of the individual Legionaries during the final battle is the truest account of the dire curse that was unleashed upon the Legion during the fighting on Signus Prime, and it is by their sacrifices and triumphs that the future of the Blood Angels is decided as much as by those of Sanguinius.

As Sanguinius surveyed the ruin wrought upon his flagship and rallied the survivors for the struggle he knew must follow, it was the Legionaries around him that began the battle proper. Raldoron, First Captain of the Legion, began by summoning from the ships above all those of the Legion that could be spared from the battle still being desperately waged in orbit. Though the corpse-ships above had not slackened their assault on the Blood Angels' armada, there was no shortage of volunteers. Indeed, the individual captains of the Three Hundred Companies vied fiercely to be among those chosen to descend to the surface of Signus Prime, though none of those chosen to stay behind and vouchsafe the security of the fleet made any complaint nor moved to deny their orders. These were not the impulsive Wolves of Fenris or the rebellious sons of Konrad Curze, and though each of the crimson-clad warriors had no less fervour than any of their brethren, they understood that a noble victory required the sacrifice of their desires.

In a sky where metal giants duelled with incarnate nightmares of stone and flesh, to simply launch themselves at the surface would be little better than suicide. Instead, the lightest and fastest cruisers in the armada staged what was intended to look like a breakout from the swarm of corpse-ships that surrounded them, an attempt to punch through the enemy and reach the open space beyond orbit. The fighting was fierce, especially with many among the ship's crews still incapacitated, and of those ships sent forth, none returned without damage, the *Dragon's Scale* and *Zodiac Wheel* so seriously that they were withdrawn from the line of battle despite the dire need for vessels. This sacrifice allowed several of the largest ships in the fleet to smash through the weakened enemy forces in low orbit and seed a hail of Drop Pods and assault shuttles into the sallow sky of Signus Prime.

There on the surface, the angels that fell from the sky beheld a sight to raise their spirits. The *Red Tear* had been transformed in but a few short hours from a broken wreck to a mighty fortress, the crimson banner of Sanguinius flying high above the smashed command deck. It was there that they assembled, 80,000 warriors of the Blood Angels, with banners representing nearly every company and Order in the Legion, alongside the small companies of the Legio Custodes and Space Wolves that still survived. The commanders met and made plans – the scouts sent out had discovered a fortress set opposite the *Red Tear* and this marked their objective on the surface. Though the nature of this citadel defied easy description, it bore the marks of the creatures that had taunted them in traps across the system as well as the banners of the treacherous Word Bearers, and that served to make it a target. Moreover, Sanguinius himself had ordered that it fall, despite the advice of several of his lieutenants that it would be wiser to simply reinforce the *Red Tear* and wait for the fleet to gain control. Yet the Angel's wrath would not be constrained or postponed – at his word, the Blood Angels mustered at last for war, to exact from the foe a price in blood for the harm they had brought the Imperium.

Historia Terra Reqem

The Wreck of the *Red Tear*

In its fiery plunge from orbit, the *Red Tear* carved a vast scar into the face of Signus Prime, yet while its outer layers were fractured and broken, its core structure remained unscathed. All primary functions remained intact and operational, but nearly 80% of its secondary functions were inoperable, some from direct damage and others due to cascade overloads of power shunts and venting systems. While internal bulkheads, vox networks and four external augur bundles remained operational, none of the main batteries were operable and only seven percent of the point defence guns could still fire. Worse yet, the engines were crippled, and without significant repair work the great ship was condemned to remain beached on the surface of Signus Prime, a poor end to a proud warship.

Of the crew complement and attached Legiones Astartes detachments, there were numerous reported casualties. Many had perished outright and a large number had sustained non-critical injuries, and those few medicae stations that still functioned were quickly overwhelmed treating the survivors. Sanguinius himself ordered priority be given to the human crew, while the Legiones Astartes relied on their own post-human fortitude to compensate for damaged limbs and lesser internal injuries. In total there remained 734 fully combat effective Legiones Astartes aboard the *Red Tear*, and another 912 whose injuries would not prevent them from fighting. Added to this complement were the 36 surviving Space Wolves and 34 Custodians, as well as the Primarch himself and a number of the Legion's most senior officers that had been aboard at the time of the crash. Lastly, there was a mere 3,000 surviving Imperial Navy crewman aboard, of which perhaps 600 were trained and combat-ready naval security.

In all, despite the damage it had suffered, the *Red Tear* remained a highly defensible fortress and an ideal beachhead for any ground assault on Signus Prime itself. Its outer hull presented a barrier equal to any bastion wall and the complement of warriors within would be able to hold their ground against any conventional foe until relieved. Had it not been for the nature of their foe and the weapons arrayed against them, then history might well have followed a far different path.

The Fire in the Sky

The fall of the *Red Tear* did not mark the end of the battle in orbit, merely a change of pace. For both sides, the departure of that mighty battleship and the apparent betrayal of those they had counted as brothers dictated a change in tactics. For the Blood Angels, it was now a battle to secure a path for the recovery of the Primarch, while their enemies seemed content merely to keep the armada penned in high orbit. The superior, almost inexhaustible numbers of the foe held the advantage over the Blood Angels, for though their ships were individually superior, each blow struck against them weakened them, while the corpse-ships were endless and indefatigable. The *Covenant of Baal* took over as command ship, with Archein Halbeth of the 14th Company serving as senior officer, a warrior known for his cautious but highly competent strategies. It is by his order that the Blood Angels vessels made the unity of the fleet its first priority, confining themselves to largely defensive operations in the face of the sheer numbers of the foe, the heavy cruisers and battleships holding a cordon clear about the armada with their formidable firepower, while the lighter craft swept preassigned sectors to keep the larger vessels safe from small craft and stray ships. In the aftermath of the Battle for Signus Prime, there are some that have blamed his caution for the losses incurred on the surface, claiming that a frontal assault might have broken the ranks of the enemy and allowed him to rain death from above onto the massed hordes below. Whether such a claim bears any truth is something that can never now be known. What is certain is that, despite the overwhelming ferocity of the corpse-fleet, the Blood Angels would emerge from the battle in orbit with fewer than ten percent of their craft listed as combat losses. With the trials yet to come, had a more fierce officer traded the fighting strength of the armada for a chance to rescue Sanguinius, he might have simply doomed them to a more complete destruction in the years that would follow.

Sector 05δ – 08η: In the Jaws of Hell

The surface of Signus Prime that was to be the stage for their revenge was little more than a field of stinking mud and broken rocks. It was bereft of any real landmarks or signs of the civilisation that should have been present, and a slow, relentless rain of sulphur and brimstone reduced visibility to little more than a few dozen feet in any direction. The first attempts to map the area between the *Red Tear* and the Cathedral of the Mark had largely failed, with the surface of the world beneath their feet changing and shifting even as they tried to pin it down. As such, the first blow of the Blood Angels' campaign was to impose some semblance of order upon this shifting landscape, stamping a grid of defined sectors across the empty plains and forcing some measure of order onto the formless.

The central sectors, from Delta-05 through Eta-08, were marked as the primary target of the initial assault. This area formed the best staging ground for a full siege of the vast cathedral sat opposed to the *Red Tear*, yet was also likely to be the most heavily defended by any sane enemy. As such, the main force of the army assembled on Signus Prime was assigned to take that area and consolidate a position for the final assault; few among the assembled ranks of the IXth Legion had any doubt that they would prevail with the Primarch at their head and the best of his sons assembled in their ranks. With the roar of the thousands of armoured vehicles heavy in the air around the fortress-wreck, the Blood Angels embarked in high spirits, each anticipating a swift and decisive victory despite the events that had brought them to this point, the cheers and battle chants ringing out with volume to match the engines of their war machines. Sanguinius himself signalled the advance in grand style, white wings outstretched and silver blade raised high against the poisoned horizon.

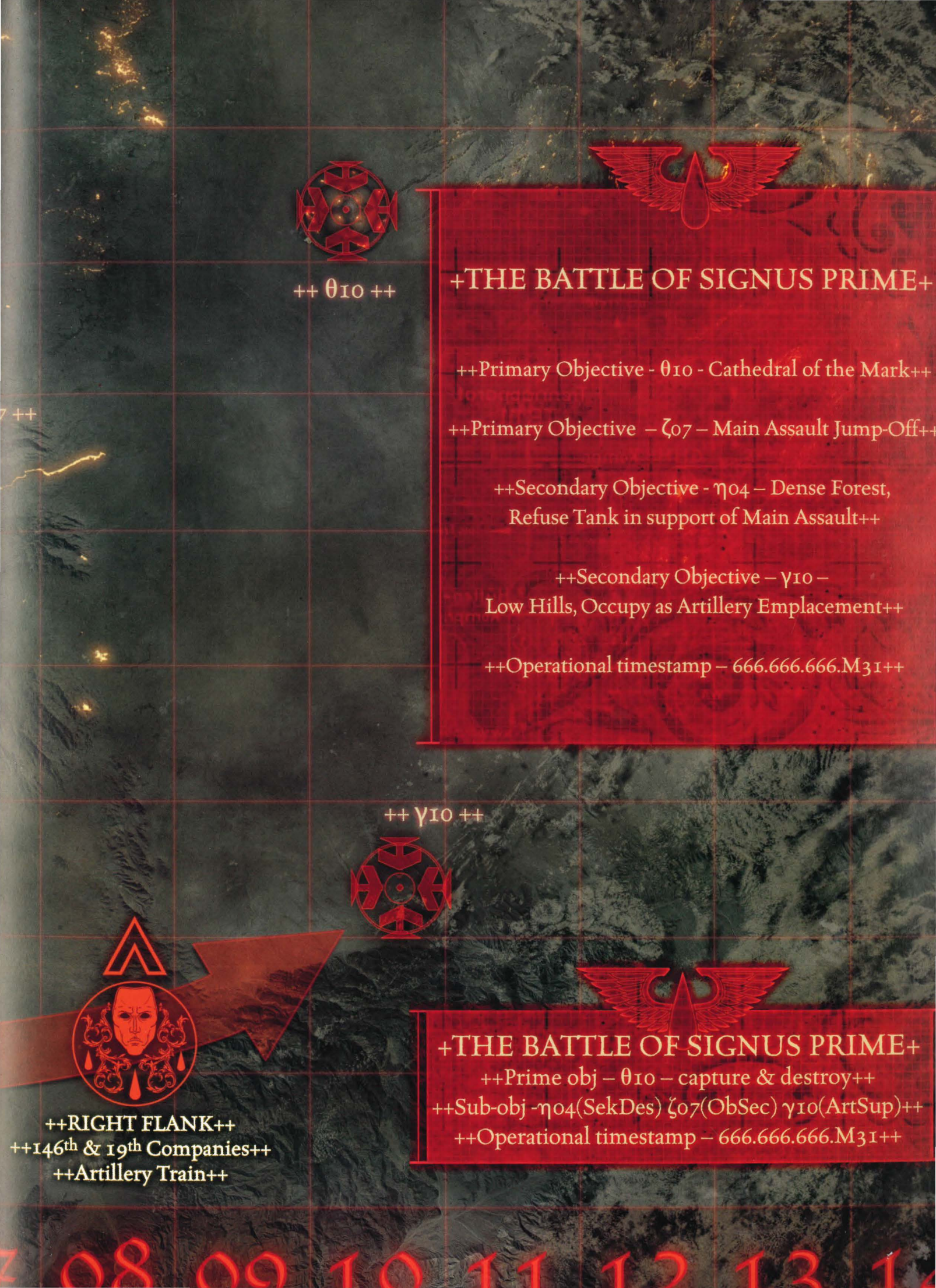
The Cathedral of the Mark

Broken, blasted cities, once-verdant fields ablaze, all belching noxious smoke into the sky while the uncounted corpses of the slain mouldered below – that was what the Blood Angels had expected to find at Signus Prime, yet in the aftermath of the *Red Tear's* crash they found only an empty wasteland, devoid of any trace of the Signus Prime recorded in the Imperium's archive picts. Indeed, initial surveys of the area around the crash site had found nothing at all. The structure later referred to as the Cathedral of the Mark was not located until several hours after the Blood Angels landed, in an area that had already been surveyed. The structure itself was of significant size, complete with inner and outer walls as well as a number of fortified towers, well-matched with any more recently built Imperium fortress. Though the materials used in its construction appear unorthodox, resembling bone or chitin more than standard ferrocrete, it was to prove just as resistant to weapons fire.

That such a sizable fortification could have been overlooked is inconceivable, but earlier reports and even orbital scans do not show the structure until long after the crash, when it appears in a location facing the *Red Tear* over a wide plain, perhaps 70 kilometres apart. The positioning is as suspect as its sudden appearance, its location was of no strategic value and served only to make it a tempting target for an opponent keen to vent his anger on the enemy. Any competent military commander would have to assume it a trap of the most obvious kind, and yet Sanguinius chose to order a full scale assault regardless.

Unknown to the majority of his followers, the Great Angel clearly saw the intent of his enemy. They knew what he truly sought in Signus was not some simple re-conquest of a fallen star system, but the future of his sons and the IXth Legion. The Cathedral of the Mark was a direct challenge; one that he could not ignore.

++ η04 ++
++LEFT FLANK++
++94th Company++
++Capita Aquilae++
++MAIN ADVANCE++
++43 Companies++
++Sanguinius Commanding++
++221st Company++
++Legio Custodes++
++WRECK OF THE RED TEAR++


++ θ10 ++
+THE BATTLE OF SIGNUS PRIME+
++Primary Objective - θ10 - Cathedral of the Mark++
++Primary Objective – ζ07 – Main Assault Jump-Off++
++Secondary Objective - η04 – Dense Forest,
Refuse Tank in support of Main Assault++
++Secondary Objective – γ10 –
Low Hills, Occupy as Artillery Emplacement++
++Operational timestamp – 666.666.666.M31++
++ γ10 ++
+THE BATTLE OF SIGNUS PRIME+
++Prime obj – θ10 – capture & destroy++
++Sub-obj -η04(SekDes) ζ07(ObSec) γ10(ArtSup)++
++Operational timestamp – 666.666.666.M31++
++RIGHT FLANK++
++146th & 19th Companies++
++Artillery Train++

Churning the befouled dirt of Signus Prime high in the air behind them, the armoured spearhead of Land Raiders and Sicaran battle tanks pressed ahead into the gloom, headlights blazing like spears. Before their departure, a screen of Legion reconnaissance and stalker units had swept the approach and found little evidence of fortifications or defences intended to stop them. Unopposed, the armoured spearhead would reach the Cathedral of the Mark in a standard Terran hour, but that was not to be – a single remaining relic of the old Signus Prime remained to halt the advance. Howling as they swept out of the veil of ash and rain, the last inhabitants of the planet Sanguinius had come to save descended on the Blood Angels screaming for death. They little resembled proud citizens of the Imperium, dressed in rags and armed with nothing more than clubs and rocks, they seemed more akin to beasts than men. Though but a tiny fragment of the vast population that once inhabited Signus, the horde numbered in the tens of thousands and they fell upon the Blood Angels without hesitation, swamping the spearhead with their numbers.

The guns of the IXth Legion thundered but the sheer number of bodies thrown against them could not be stopped. The debased citizens of Signus seemed to hunger for death at their saviour's hands, whatever torment they had endured since the fall of their home had utterly broken them, stripped them of their humanity and bound them body and soul to their conquerors. The Great Angel, Sanguinius, retired in the face of the assault, unable to slaughter those he had come to save, and the armoured spearhead bogged down amid the killing that was taking place. With a heavy heart, Sanguinius halted the advance and ordered the columns of infantry that followed to move forwards, calling up the Angel's Tears, the Destroyers of the IXth Legion, to clear a path forwards. Grim of aspect and resolute of action, the silver-masked Erelim unleashed a new kind of hell on Signus Prime.

The massed boltguns of the Blood Angels infantry lines and the flamer and rotor cannon of the Erelim cast back the first assault, leaving behind only the corpses of the fallen, granted a final peace in a brutal death. It was, however, only a temporary reprieve, and the Blood Angels found themselves under near-continuous assault and only capable of slow progress towards their objectives due to the sheer weight of numbers thrown against them. The enemy's assaults served less to inflict harm upon the Blood Angels than to disrupt their advance and separate the various columns of the vanguard, leaving them more vulnerable to what was to follow. As the slower elements finally reached the front of the advance, squadrons of obsolete Kratos battle tanks from the *Red Tear's* reserve armouries joined the fray. Previously retired in favour of faster, more multi-purpose vehicles such as the ubiquitous Predator, the Kratos served as a dedicated infantry support tank and its heavy cannon quickly opened a path for the infantry to follow. Between the righteous fury of the Erelim and supporting infantry echelons, and the devastation wrought by the canister shells of the Kratos, the vanguard began to advance once more.

After less than three hours of fighting, the Blood Angels had reaped a high toll of lives, but had travelled less than 40 kilometres. The bloody trail of pathetically broken bodies marked their passage, a sign of both success and failure, for each body represented another loss in the mission to save Signus. Of all of the weapons so far employed against the winged Primarch this was perhaps the most cruel, for it reduced his Legion to little more than butchers, and each report from the cannon and each death scream cut him more than any sword blade ever had. Despite the triumphant departure he had overseen, Sanguinius had since spent much of the fighting secluded away from the front lines, but that was to change. With the waves of human thralls flagging in the face of the Blood Angels' firepower and determination, new enemies had begun to appear in their

Historia Terra Reqvem

The Vanguard Host

The main body of Sanguinius' Legion was assembled for the central advance, his principal thrust at the heart of the foe. Here was to be found a roster of some of the greatest heroes of the Great Crusade and the most veteran warriors to be found in any of the Emperor's Legions, a host fit for legends. In total it numbered around 50,000 warriors, organised into 43 separate companies and ad-hoc warbands, all bearing a full panoply of Imperial vexilla, crests and honours. They marched at the side of Sanguinius himself and as such no warrior wore other than the finest wargear available to him in the stores and armouries of the fallen *Red Tear*. What follows is a summary of that host which took the main field at Signus Prime:

Command Echelon

Overall command of the battle was maintained by the central contingent at the start of the battle for Signus Prime, co-ordinated through the surviving vox-networks of the *Red Tear*.

Sanguinius, Primarch of the IXth Legion

Azkaellon, First among the Sanguinary Guard

Hanziel, First among the Angel's Tears

Raldoron, First Captain of the IXth Legion

The Vanguard

The vanguard of the Blood Angel's advance consisted of the bulk of the Legion's mechanised forces, armoured vehicles and heavy infantry. Those infantry assets attached were mostly either assigned to Rhino, Land Raider or Mastodon troop transports, or equipped with jump packs in order to keep pace with the advance.

The following companies of the Blood Angels were present in their entire complement: 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 7th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 14th, 16th, 24th, 33rd, 34th, 39th, 57th, 72nd, 88th, 111th, 131st, 133rd, 144th, 148th, 155th, 156th, 158th, 164th, 211th, 232nd, 244th, 246th, 251st, 253rd, 259th, 266th, 267th, 269th, 270th, 271st, 282nd, 288th, 291st, 294th, 295th, and 299th.

In addition to these, there were also smaller contingents representing the vast majority of the different companies of the Legion, each eager to show their colours at the side of the Primarch himself.

The Left Flank Host

Assembled to act as a simple screening force for the main advance, the left flank was the smallest of the hosts mustered for the final battle. As such, its commanders numbered not among the legends of the Imperium at that time and the warriors under their command expected little more than the bitter glory of a duty fulfilled while others fought in the full view of history.

Command Echelon

Though connected to the vanguard's vox channels for the initial stages of the battle, the left flank operated with considerable independence, with the assigned commanders making the majority of tactical decisions.

Archmagos Domina Erane Shurol, Prime-locus of the Capita Aquilae

Centurion Aster Crohne, brevetted commander of the 94th Company and attached units for the duration of the campaign.

The Left Flank

The 53 remaining maniples of the Capita Aquilae, comprising a mix of automata patterns and types, from the humble Coleoptera scout-automata to the towering Thanatar class siege-automata.

300 warriors of the 94th Company, as well as another 400 Legionaries from companies whose commanders were not present on the surface, including a large number of the oldest Dreadnoughts awoken from their slumber in the belly of the *Red Tear*.

midst. These twisted creatures were much like those encountered on Ta'loc and Scoltrum, each some monstrous amalgam born of the ancient myths and superstitions of Old Terra and a dozen other worlds. At first they were few and small in stature, easily dispatched by the Space Marines, but as they pressed further forwards more and more began to appear until it was no longer an ill-equipped horde of thralls that the Blood Angels faced, but a swarm of nightmares, some towering above even the mightiest of the war machines assembled by the IXth Legion.

It was then that the Great Angel came forth once more, all cold fury and bright steel. His enemy finally at hand, he gave vent to the first stirrings of his anger, working his sword with an implacable skill that reduced even the largest warp-ogres to gruesome ruin. The return of the white-winged Primarch to the front lines set his sons to fighting with renewed vigour, and with the slaying of each of the creatures, their spirits rose. Here was a battle that was familiar to them, an enemy they could face, an enemy they believed they could kill and a struggle they thought they could fight and win on their own terms. The companies surged forwards, competing to carve a path to the Primarch's side where he fought at the apex of the advance. The Terminator armour-clad warriors of the 5th and 9th Companies expended so much ammunition blasting a path forwards that their reserves began to run low, while even the well-honed combat blades of the 5th began to dull. Archein Maulgrehn and the proud warriors of the 11th fought alongside the veteran 24th as the very ground about them split and cracked to disgorge new swarms of foul creatures, resolute in their dedication to the Great Angel.

Even as the forces of the enemy swelled before them, a heaving throng of monstrosities, degenerates and beasts, the Blood Angels did not slow. Indeed, the resistance they now met only stoked their battle fury and encouraged them to fight harder. Each towering troll that slammed into the Kratos battle tanks and Land Raider transports was another trophy to be taken, each braying herd of chimera slaughtered a small measure of revenge for the people of Signus. Such was the valour and skill of the IXth Legion that their casualties were light, the wounded insisting on remaining with the vanguard while the critically hurt were removed to the *Red Tear* in those transports withdrawn from the line due to damage. Six hours into the battle, the Blood Angels, with Sanguinius at their head, finally reached grid reference Zeta-07 at the centre of the battlefield that lay between the *Red Tear* and the Cathedral of the Mark. There, standing astride the hilltops like a dark god of slaughter, waiting as though it knew what bloody work was to come and relished it, was a dark winged and grotesque mirror to the angelic Primarch. In every record of that battle, each description of this monstrous creature varies slightly, but all agree on one point – as Sanguinius strode forth to stand before it, blade raised in challenge, its only reaction was a smile.

Sector 01η – 04ι: The Rewards of Duty

Sitting like a dark shroud over the far left flank of the battlefield was a morass of stunted trees and twisted groping briar. Though not a threat in and of itself, it served as the perfect cloak for enemy forces seeking to muster out of sight of the vanguard approaching the Cathedral of the Mark, especially with the strange aura of Signus Prime interfering so with attempts at orbital scans. Left unguarded, it would pose a threat to any operations undertaken against what Sanguinius believed to be the enemy's main stronghold, but few among the host relished being left out of the battle that was to come. As such, the duty fell to the one contingent in the army assembled before the *Red Tear* that had no pride to injure, nor need for revenge to fulfil.

Landed among the other reinforcements in a trio of black Maggadon class landers forged in distant Anvillus were the silent ranks of battle-automata that comprised the Capita Aquilae. The engrams of their artificial cortex did not register any dishonour in being excluded from the main battle, and Magos Domina Shurol well-understood the strategic necessity of the action. With none of the fanfare that accompanied the Blood Angels' departure, and in near silence, the towering metal warriors of the Legio Cybernetica formed maniples and marched forth. At their side was the 94th Company, still under the temporary command of Centurion Crohne and still suffering under the stigma of their failed operation on Ta'loc. The 94th, specialised in skirmish actions and reconnaissance, was well-suited to act as a flanking force and as a relic of the old IXth Legion was considered something of a shame of the Legion's past to many in the inner circle of the Blood Angels.

Passing into the canopy of the dark and broken forest, the 94th quickly found the terrain as hostile as any enemy army. Indeed, it fought their advance as tenaciously as any foe might have, the roots of the trees burst from the earth to tear and grasp, while the thorns pierced even through tempered ceramite. Stealth and speed were quickly abandoned and the flank host resorted to using flamers and the sheer bulk of the larger automata to force a path forwards. Despite the difficulty they faced infiltrating the forest, the host did not encounter the same hordes of foes as the central spearhead did. None of the fallen citizens of Signus prowled the woods, only the twisted creatures seemingly born of ancient superstition and myth and those only in small bands. Falling upon the Blood Angels in frenzied ambushes and with no heed for their own survival, they caused no few casualties, but targeted only the crimson-clad warriors of the IXth Legion, paying little heed to the automata save where the metal giants plied their inhuman strength in battle.

The Right Flank Host

Composed almost entirely of slower artillery engines, such as the Medusa and Basilisk tanks, smaller Rapier platforms and Deredeo pattern Dreadnoughts, the force assigned to the right flank had a single objective – to occupy sector Gamma-10 and provide fire support for the main advance. To that end, they were accompanied by a force of infantry to provide security in case of enemy assault, and to provide accurate targeting data in the absence of an augur link to the orbiting starships.

Command Echelon
Archein Betric Sizal, commanding the armoury reserves.

Venerable Hamonah, Dreadnought Keruvim, once Lord of the Storm Winds and Principal of the Crimson Paladins.

The Right Flank
Organised into 18 separate batteries, the main force on the right flank consisted of artillery vehicles and heavy Dreadnoughts – in total some 300 heavy vehicles, 518 Rapier platforms and other light artillery platforms and 73 Dreadnoughts.

Attached to this force were the remains of the 146th and 19th Companies, both of which had suffered heavy casualties during the orbital battle and subsequent drop, and numbered in total 900 warriors. The 146th's survivors were mostly heavily armed Heavy Support squads, while the 19th consisted largely of Breacher squads and other Zone Mortalis specialists.

Governed by the irrefutable law of logic, which dictated the preservation of combat assets for later expenditure, Magos Domina Shurol ordered the Capita Aquilae to take the front lines. Thanatar siege-automata preceded the advance with a barrage of roiling plasma blasts, reducing concealing undergrowth and flailing Daemon-trees to ash. While stolid Castellax warrior-automata augmented the formations of the 94th Company, anchoring them against any attack, scythe-armed Vorax hunters joined the recon squads at the tip of the assault. The two forces combined made swift progress, quickly outstripping the advance of Sanguinius and the main host on the mud plains, raging fires and the inhuman screams of the burning trees following in the wake of their assault.

Within the space of a few short hours, they had reached the heart of the forest, as ordered by the Great Angel. Behind them was only ash and ruin, their objective accomplished with such brutal thoroughness that the Magos Domina pronounced it acceptable. Though they still suffered attacks from those creatures that swarmed on the edges of the great horde that Sanguinius confronted head-on, the flank was now secure. The silent ranks of automata and prowling Blood Angels stood sentinel against any hidden horde of monsters that might threaten Sanguinius' main strike. As Centurion Crohne transmitted the vox-code that signalled his success, he and those with him beheld a red light on the horizon, centred on the hill that the Great Angel had set his force against, a light whose dire radiance cut the heart from their victory.

Sector 09β – 11γ: The Unseen Hand
On the far side of the battlefield, formed of crushed and shattered rock, compacted into low mounds by some unimaginable force, a range of hills dominated the right flank. Overlooking both the wide plains and the towering fortifications of the Cathedral of the Mark, it was a position the Blood Angels' strategists considered ideally located to serve as an artillery and fire support position. As such, the slower moving armoured vehicles and artillery platforms recovered from the *Red Tear's* armouries, which were deemed incapable of keeping pace with the main advance, were assigned infantry support and ordered to secure the position.

As with the other branches of the assault, the initial advance went swiftly, though the slower artillery platforms and Dreadnoughts could not match the pace of Sanguinius' main host in the centre. Just as in the vanguard, the Blood Angels were beset by the brutalised remnants of Signus Prime's people, though in numbers that the guns of the infantry escort and lumbering Dreadnoughts easily held off. Yet the bodies of the wailing thralls were not being spent to destroy the Blood Angels, but simply to delay them, as in order to repel the attack, the slower elements of the convoy were obliged to stop in order to give fire. Despite the firepower of the Rapier platforms and heavy cannon, the enemy did not relent in their assault, throwing themselves into the barrage without hesitation or remorse, determined it seemed to keep them pinned in place.

Unlike the simple directives of mortal generals, the orders of the Great Angel were not to be set aside while his sons still drew breath and retained the will to fight. The warriors of the 19th Company led the first breakout attempt, advancing behind a wall of ceramite shields with bolters blasting a path forwards through the press of bodies. The poorly-armed wretches that were all that remained of the people of Signus could not hold them, yet the assault was turned back. Figures of stature to match the sons of Sanguinius, but in slate grey armour, stopped their progress again with a series of hit and run assaults and ambushes that crippled a number of the artillery tanks. The Word Bearers had returned and this time their loyalty was plain to see, declared not for their brothers, but in the service of those who had destroyed Signus and its people.

The grey-clad Traitors were fewer in number than their crimson kin, but such was the shock among the ranks of the Blood Angels to see fellow Legiones Astartes making war against their brothers at the behest of monsters that the sons of Sanguinius faltered in the attack. The advance on the right

bogged down and slowed, dissolving into skirmishes and holding actions that saw it halted in the foothills at sector Beta-09. The Word Bearers fought tenaciously to keep Sanguinius' artillery train out of the main confrontation, and the Blood Angels had not the numbers to fight clear without incurring significant casualties. As Sanguinius stepped forth to face the dark prince of Signus Prime, the warriors of the right flank could only watch from a distance as dark crackling clouds of ash and vile lightning gathered on the horizon.

Sector 06ζ: Dreams Rendered into Ash

Waiting at the centre of the battlefield was a nightmare beyond imagining, a vision of madness that many among the crimson host had witnessed in the fevered dreams that had haunted them during the fighting in Signus. It manifested as a giant sheathed in bronze and crowned with dark horns, the beat of whose wings caused the roiling clouds above to loose a downpour of rancid blood, and behind it there was a horde of lesser creatures whose crimson and bronze hue matched their leader and whose numbers filled the plains to the horizon. That which the Blood Angels had faced up until this point had been a merest fraction of the horde that waited for them there at the heart of the battlefield. Despite this, the Great Angel and his sons did not hesitate, for they believed in the righteousness of their cause and the anger it kindled in them would see them to victory regardless of the odds now set against them.

With a roar to match the rumblings of the battle in the heavens above them, the Blood Angels charged, Sanguinius foremost among them, surrounded by the golden forms of his Ikisat and the most favoured of his captains. Still formed into their ordered columns, the main host of the Blood Angels advanced under cover of a hail of bolts and missiles, meeting the disorganised waves of the foe as a cliff meets the sea, breaking their formation wide open. The momentum of their attack carried them deep into the mass of foes, with Sanguinius at their head cutting a path towards the waiting form of the Daemon general known to history as Ka'bhanda.

The press of the melee was fierce as the sheer weight of the enemy's numbers forced them into the ranks of the Blood Angels. Gangly, screaming horrors hacked at the line with cleavers of black iron, horned fiends the colour of old blood capered as they laughed and killed, while vast bloated monsters smashed aside armoured vehicles and grappled with Dreadnoughts. Many among the IXth fell, but many more fought on, and slowly but surely they gained ground, still sure of their eventual victory. Sanguinius had overseen the fall of countless civilisations and directed the eradication of dangerous xenos breeds across the galaxy, with him to guide them none doubted that victory would come and all fought so that they might herald its arrival. Then the Angel stood before the Daemon and everything changed.

The fighting that had come before had been little more than a prelude to what unfolded at that fel meeting. For the destruction wrought by cannon, blade and Daemon could not compare to what Sanguinius and his fel opponent were capable of, and any who attempted to intervene in their duel became little more than collateral damage to that titanic struggle. As the two figureheads clashed, the fury of their bitter rivalry spurred those around them to even greater feats of destruction, with the Blood Angels' disciplined formations starting to fray in their eagerness to meet the enemy blade-to-talon as had their Primarch. All across the vast plains at the centre of the battlefield, war was waged at its most basic level, blades and ceramite-clad fists met bone talons and razor claws as crimson angels grappled with bronze fiends in the grasping mud of Signus Prime. Neither side gave thought to quarter or strategy, only to slaughter and death, while in the skies above them white wings clashed with black.

There, in the grasp of whatever strange power held Signus Prime in its thrall, the fighting raged for what might have been but

The Angel and the Daemon

In the annals of the Horus Heresy there are many confrontations that have become legends in their own right, duels that have shaken the very foundations of the Imperium and set the course of history with their results. When Ferrus Manus fell at the hands of his brother, when Magnus and Russ tore Prospero apart and when the Emperor and Horus finally met in battle, all of these shall shine brightly in the memory of Mankind long after the details of this dark age have been forgotten. The first battle fought between Sanguinius and the Daemon known as Ka'bhanda should number among these epic tales, but among the Blood Angels Legion it has long been taboo to speak of it.

This clash, more than any other, was to set their path for so many millennia to come. Yet, unlike so many other battles, it was not to be decided by something as simple as force of arms. The two beings, each mighty beyond the measure of mortal men, traded blows that could sunder the hulls of the finest armour and shattered the very hills about them, and yet the wounds they caused each other were of little consequence. Pressed by the towering Daemon beast, Sanguinius took their battle into the skies above, white pinions matched by black, claw-tipped wings, and yet still neither could strike a decisive blow. The heavens shook as they fought, and when they fell, exhausted by their battle and the many wounds each bore, the ground shattered beneath them, and still they rose to continue their fight. This conflict was not to be settled by blades, but instead by words.

The great bronze axe and bladed whip of the Warp-prince could not strike as keenly as the words it spoke, words which tore the heart from the winged Primarch – *Horus has betrayed you.* Such fears had preyed upon him since their arrival at Signus, but now the truth of it cut him to the quick, yet alone even this could not fell him. The creature Ka'bhanda took the opportunity to strike one more blow, bringing the Great Angel to his knees, and there made the final strike. Yet this was not to be a simple wound, one that spilled only blood and might someday heal. Ka'bhanda struck at the Great Angel's soul, waiting with the Primarch at its feet while the sons of Sanguinius charged forth to protect their sire. It waited as the Primarch beheld the dedication of his sons, the faith they held in their father and the valour they displayed in his name. It waited as Sanguinius took note of each of those that sought to come to his rescue. Then Ka'bandha destroyed them all and cast the Primarch's soul into a darkness greater than any mortal wound it might have struck. It is a darkness that has lingered long after that day on Signus Prime and one that will perhaps never be driven away.

mere moments or for long hours, all under the baleful watch of Signus' corrupted sun. None that were present and lived to speak of it would ever recall for certain how long they killed under its glare, but all remembered when it stopped. For one agonising moment, the Blood Angels all ceased their struggles, caught mid-stroke as their eyes were drawn to a sight that defied sanity. That was the moment when victory turned her face from them, when hope fled the field, when the galaxy stopped making sense. When the Great Angel fell and moved no more.

Sector 01a: The Last Bolt-hole of Victory

The Angel had fallen. The sight of it left some stunned and some reduced to a mindless fury, a rage that consumed them and set a dark fire burning in their hearts. Spurred by rage and grief, the Blood Angels closest to the tragedy threw themselves at the triumphant prince of Daemons, only to be consumed by a stroke of its axe made more powerful by the blood of the Primarch that soaked it. This blow spelled the end of hundreds of Blood Angels and stoked the dark fury that consumed them, breaking the chains of rationality and discipline that had once bound them. Only the strongest willed of the Legion could restrain the urge to fight and kill until nothing remained but corpses, and these few warriors, many clad in the gold of the Ikisat, formed a wall around the fallen body of the Primarch.

There remained only one place on the battlefield where any measure of safety remained, the fortified wreck of the *Red Tear*, sector Alpha-01. Up to this point it had only endured swift raids and skirmishes with flitting spindle-winged predators and vast, bat-winged dragons, and the defenders had suffered little in terms of casualties. Moreover, the teleport chambers buried at the heart of the ship still retained enough of a charge for a single operation, stealing the comatose form of the Primarch and his bodyguards from the chaos of the battlefield. Yet despite the sophisticated medicae bays, and the skills of the Apothecaries present, the Great Angel remained beyond their reach, and his very presence drew the attention of the foe upon them.

With Sanguinius caged and vulnerable within the corpse of the *Red Tear* and many of his sons consumed by a rage that seemed to know no end, the enemy moved to finish the Great Angel. Where before the attacks had been small things, enough to keep the ship's defenders pinned in place but not enough to warrant summoning reinforcements, now a vast host of airborne nightmares fell upon them. Circumventing the main battle, the creatures turned the sky above the wreck black with their numbers, swooping down to fall upon those who stood in defence of the *Red Tear* like a terrible rain, unending and unstoppable. From the flanks of the once proud ship, the warriors of the 221st who held to their posts replied with a punishing hail of gunfire from entrenched positions and operational turrets, and the black blood of Daemons fell about them in a deluge. Those lost to rage and grief threw themselves at the horde without thought to tactics or discipline. Yet neither force could halt such a tide of foes, only delay it.

Exhausting much of their limited munitions within the first hour of battle, the 221st was left to meet the foe with fists and blades on the open hull of the wrecked battleship, anger granting them the strength to fight on. Each of the crimson-clad warriors that fell did not do so alone, dragging many of the foe into death's embrace alongside them, but the 221st had only so many lives to offer, while the Daemon horde seemed endless. Archein Halbeth fought at their forefront, his glaive reaping a high toll until a bloated and rotting raptor carried him aloft, the few remaining warriors of the 221st now little more than small enclaves of resistance. Mobbed by lesser airborne foes, the Archein fought on defiantly, cleaving apart those his glaive could reach and skewering the vast beast that held him, yet the fall wrought what the enemy could not and Archein Halbeth did not rise again.

The 221st unable to contain them any longer, the enemy surged towards the gaps in the *Red Tear's* armour, seeking a path to its heart and the weakened Primarch. Horus' grand trap was now well and truly sprung, its jaws closing upon its prey with inexorable force, yet one more obstacle remained before the final blow was struck. At each rent or portal on the surface of the wreck the Crimson Paladins stood ready, the oaths sworn to their Primarch more potent than the rage that clawed at them, their bright ranks interspersed with the tall warriors of the Legio Custodes. Their shields and blades formed an impenetrable barrier, casting back the foe time and time again, yet even such warriors as the Keruvim could not stand

The Rearguard

Chosen by lot, the rearguard force was assigned to guard the *Red Tear*, both to safeguard a valuable relic of the Legion and to ensure that the enemy did not deny the host a valuable fall-back position. However, as the role was to remove those given that duty from the line of battle in a conflict both crucial and historic, as such the forces assigned to it were sustained only by the knowledge their duty was essential to overall victory. In addition to a single company of Blood Angels, the 221st, the bulk of the Crimson Paladins, who were sworn to defend the Primarch's halls, remained at the *Red Tear*, along with the few warriors of the Legio Custodes that had joined the fleet.

Command Echelon

Barbiel, First among the Crimson Paladins

Archein Jerick Halbeth, commander of the 221st Company

Prefect Kalimak Sebran, Ephoroi of the Legio Custodes

The Rearguard

The 221st Company of the Blood Angels formed the bulk of the rearguard force, numbering over 400 warriors at the start of the battle and mainly formed of line infantry and support squads. Archein Halbeth, in command of the 221st, held a reputation as a solid, if unimaginative, leader in whom the Primarch and his inner circle could trust to hold the *Red Tear* at any cost. As well as line troops, there were also approximately 300 Crimson Paladins, warriors of the Legion's First Sphere sworn to guard the Primarch's sanctum as the Seraphs were sworn to guard his person. The Crimson Paladins, also known as the Keruvim, operated outside of the usual Legion command structure, and went about their duties without regard for the condition of the *Red Tear*. Last among the defenders were the Legio Custodes, who remained aloof from the other warriors, though they fought readily when the enemy attacked. Indeed, of all those among the host, the Custodians seemed the least surprised at the revealed nature of their foe.

against those numbers forever, and after a few short hours less than half of those who had begun the battle still remained standing.

Even as his sons fought desperately to hold the *Red Tear*, another battle unfolded within the depths of the great ship as the few gathered adepts of the Librarius sought to awaken the Angel. Every level of the *Red Tear* rang with the sounds of conflict and the cries of the dying, corpses both human and otherwise choked each checkpoint and bulkhead. Even the aether resounded to the sound of the once-Librarians' struggle to awaken the Primarch from his dark dreams of blood and destruction. Many among the defenders fell into the grip of that curse, running mad with rage or grief, and killing whomsoever crossed their path, and despair settled like a shroud over the battlefield.

The strongest willed, still clear-headed despite the rage that seethed in their hearts, steadied their stance, knowing that the ground where they stood would be their grave. At the entrance to the inner halls, the Keruvim and Custodes rallied about Barbiel, whose great hammer dripped with the ichor of slain Daemons, and on the outer hull, the last of the 221st Company formed a wall of bodies around the fallen form of their captain. Victory was now little more than ashes, even simple survival seemed beyond their reach, and for those taken by the Daemon's madness perhaps not even a warrior's death waited. It was to be the last hour of the IXth Legion, for all those present knew that even should some miracle preserve them, they would never be the same again.

Sector 03θ: Codicil 03.23

All across the battlefield, chaos reigned; the enemy cavorted in numbers and forms beyond count and many among the ranks of the IXth Legion lost themselves in mindless slaughter. The stunted mutant wood that shrouded the left flank, briefly controlled by the Blood Angels, was now awash with nightmares. So great were their numbers that Centurion Crohne ordered those of the 95th Company that still heeded his orders to abandon defensive formations and instead fight a fluid, mobile campaign – avoiding being pinned down and overrun. The Shroudmakers, veterans of many such campaigns in the days before Sanguinius ruled the Legion, fell once again into the patterns of old, the brutal rhythm of strike, regroup and strike once again. They fought with every ounce of bitterness and spite they could muster; traps, ambushes, feigned retreats – every weapon in their arsenal was thrown at the foe, every strike calculated to bite as deeply and as cruelly as possible.

The encoded engrams of the Capita Aquilae's metal warriors felt not the bite of the Daemonic rage, but even those indomitable constructs fared poorly against such a mass of foes. Lacking the mobility and hard-won skill of the Shroudmakers, they were forced to form ranks and meet the assault head-on, while the Blood Angels led a deadly game of hit and run through the forest about them. Multi-limbed horrors tore their armour, bloated slug creatures vomited torrents of living flame over them and even Blood Angels whose sanity had fled threw themselves at them, but the impassive automata held their formation. At the height of the fighting, a mob of vast brute-Daemons, crowned with a halo of horns and spikes, tore through the ranks of gore-drenched automata, and though several fell to the steel fists and roaring guns of the Capita Aquilae's metal warriors, the formation they had held was sundered and broken. The battle stood upon a precipice, one step away from a plunge into an abyss from which there could be no return. Were the flank to fall, the main body of the Blood Angels would stand open to envelopment and destruction in detail by the numerically superior forces of their foe. It would spell the end of the IXth Legion.

Into this maelstrom stepped Magos Domina Shurol, the long-handled hammer she bore a fulcrum upon which she sought to lever victory from defeat, leading a ferocious counter-attack into a tide of monsters capable of tearing Dreadnoughts asunder. Though it cost the mistress of the Capita Aquilae her legs, sheared away by the counter-stroke of some Daemon's claws trailing wires and augmetic jacks, the assault was blunted, and with the intervention of Aster Crohne and the elite of the Shroudmakers, turned aside in a hard-fought melee. For a brief moment, calm descended upon the flank, disturbed only by the cries of the dying, the distant roar of battle and the wordless anger that seethed within each Blood Angels Legionary's hearts.

Between those of their brethren fallen to the dark rage and those cut down by the foe, the 95th Company numbered less than 100 combat-capable warriors, with the Capita Aquilae faring little better, many of its few remaining automata now missing limbs and weapons. On the plains past their position, the main battle still continued unabated, a seemingly endless field of indistinct shapes killing and dying in the distance, with the allegiance of those involved almost impossible to determine, such was the ferocity of the fighting. Deep within the woods, the forces of the enemy gathered again in numbers great enough to sweep aside the remaining defenders and crash down into the beleaguered Blood Angels host below. Centurion Crohne and his allies had turned them back once at great cost, but a second such triumph seemed impossible.

A hasty council of war convened under the twisted eaves of the blood-soaked forest; the battered Centurion of the 95th and his remaining sergeants met with the crippled Shurol and her magi. The Blood Angels, rage barely under control in the wake of Sanguinius' fall, were little use as strategists and the resources available to the small force were few. It seemed to those present that the last hope of victory had fled, and despair

From the Depths of Hell Itself

Upon his return to the *Red Tear*, Sanguinius bore a tapestry of wounds that would have slain any mortal warrior, but nothing that could lay low such a being as one of the Emperor's own Primarchs. Whatever wound the great Daemon general of Signus had inflicted that kept the Angel silent and still was not one of the body, but rather one of the soul – an affliction that the healers of the IXth Legion were ill-equipped to deal with. Sanguinius languished in a state closer to death than it was to life, unresponsive as furious battle was waged, both by the Apothecaries that sought to revive him and the warriors of the *Red Tear* that sought to hold back the foe.

It was not to be the skills of the learned or the valour of the brave that restored the Great Angel, but instead the disobedience of the outcast. A wound such as that sustained by the Primarch existed not in the realm of mortals, but in that of the soul, and of all of the Legion it was the warrior-scholars of the now defunct Librarius who best understood how to deal with such afflictions. So a third battle was waged deep within the *Red Tear*, one fought for the spirit of the Primarch by a conclave of those he once forsook at the order of his Father.

only tightened the grip of rage upon their hearts. Her internal processor and augmetic implants immune to the dictates of emotion, Magos Domina Shurol, carried by a battered Thanatar automata, is known to have assessed the situation in these few words, '*Ammunition supplies are minimal, losses among available combat assets have reached critical levels. There is only one remaining logical option. Attack.*'

With the distant commanders of the main force who still retained their senses embroiled in a struggle to the death, and every corner of the battlefield overrun or heavily besieged, there were few to hear the final transmission of the 95th Company, none to mark their bravery nor countermand their sacrifice, vain though it might have seemed. A small dagger of crimson and silver hurled blindly at the heart of the foe, they charged forth into the darkness that waited in the forest's centre, to hold it in check as long as they still drew breath.

Sector 10Γ: In the Company of Death

Death was everywhere, and not even the furthest corners of the battlefield knew any measure of hope. On the right, the Blood Angels heavy armour and artillery was being slowly ground to pieces, the Word Bearers driving packs of Daemons into their guns and picking off those IXth Legion warriors who fell to the coiling despair and ran amok. A lesser prince among the Daemons smashed open a hole in the barricade of armoured vehicles, and behind it followed the Word Bearers assassins. Surrounded and cut off by grey-armoured killers bearing cursed blades, Archein Sizal fell, his armour rent and Daemonic poison seething in his veins. His death seemed to be the final blow for the forces gathered on the right flank, many giving in to the rage that sought to steal their reason and blindly throwing themselves at the enemy, seeking only blood and death.

The Dreadnought Hamonah, still honoured as a member of the Crimson Paladins, kept to the oaths he had sworn centuries before. There could be no surrender, whether the foe be flesh and blood or the hidden dark of his own soul. Blaring forth a challenge from his vox units, Hamonah slammed into the ranks of the Unseen Hand, powerful kicks from his armoured legs turning the Word Bearers assassins into red ruin. The prince among Daemons came for the elder Dreadnought, claws keen enough to slice ceramite like cloth, and Hamonah's arm cannon belched forth a rain of incandescent plasma. The point-blank blast tore the brute monster apart, but left Hamonah's right arm a ruined, smoking stump, and the Dreadnought howled out his pain and rage surrounded by corpses and the wreck of Sanguinius' artillery train.

Little remained of the 146th and 19th Companies save mobs of screaming killers and a few knots of desperate warriors holding to their positions. Hamonah's stubborn defiance did little more than buy a few more minutes of survival, as the Word Bearers and their dark allies withdrew to regroup and return in greater numbers. Those lost to rage pursued the beasts and fell to the Word Bearers' ambushes, their fury and their lives wasted and serving only to please the foe; those that remained behind took a tight hold of their weapons and tried not to listen to the braying of monsters in the dark. Such was the clamour of the horde of beasts waiting for them that a new sound went almost unheard – it was not the guttural roar of beasts, nor twisted taunts in the tongue of Colchis, but a familiar chant that grew louder with every moment that passed.

Screaming horrors and barbed fiends rushed forwards to swamp the surviving crimson-clad warriors, whose guns had long since run dry, but they met instead a wall of Legiones Astartes in armour of black, the songs of Baal heavy in the air about them. Almost like shadows, this new force appeared from the vast wilderness beyond the battlefield, yet glimpses of crimson shone beneath the thick coat of ash that stained their armour the colour of night, alongside the numerals 202. It was Elai Jannus and the survivors of the *Ifrit Nine's* wreck; having marched through kilometres of hellish wasteland under a rain of ash they had finally reached the fight. The *Liturgy of the Blood* was their shield against the

Broken Angels and Fallen Wolves

The Horus Heresy spawned many dark legends and tales of ill-omen which some among the Legions to survive that cataclysmic conflict would like to forget. The Battle for Signus Prime numbers foremost amongst these, and the Blood Angels rarely speak of what transpired, of the events that would leave such a dark stain on both their honour and souls for centuries to come. Some would blame the events on the influence of dark powers, or the manipulation of the Word Bearers, and yet the tales that are known speak of the dark past of the Legion which Sanguinius had long sought to bury.

What is certain is that, with the fall of the Angel on Signus Prime, almost every last Blood Angel within a thousand metres lost all sense and reason. There are verified reports of warriors abandoning their positions and heavy weapons to engage in close quarters combat with the nearest foe, disregarding both discipline and prearranged strategies. There are many tales of lone Blood Angels warriors plunging into mobs of grasping horrors, their bolters reduced to mere clubs in frenzied melee, and dying alone in a futile effort to avenge the fall of their lord. Some entire units gave in to the despair that swept through the Blood Angels host and threw themselves at the enemy, giving little heed to the peril they placed supporting units in as they abandoned the ordered lines of the initial attack.

In the more extreme cases, there are some tales of Blood Angels attacking each other or even allies and unarmed civilian personnel. There is some evidence that links the 5th and 11th Companies, under Amit and Maulgrehn, with the disappearance of the Space Wolves contingent attached to the army. Thegn Redknife and his men are listed on no casualty report from the battle, and their last known position was between the 11th and 5th Companies. Had they fallen in honest combat then the Blood Angels would speak of their valour, and yet there are no tales told of the Space Wolves who marched forth with Sanguinius that day.

Those closest to the Primarch when he fell, and the darkness unleashed by the Daemon general in the wake of that tragedy, suffered the worst of the madness. Few among those would survive the fighting that day, having given themselves fully to the suicidal fury, yet the toll they reaped upon the foe in exchange for their lives was great indeed. Those at a further distance seemed to have suffered only to a lesser degree, and many more among those at the fringes of the battlefield were able to retain their sanity and fight as warriors rather than mindless killers. However, even those who managed to resist the dark call that was unleashed upon the battlefields of Signus were still marked by its stain and would be haunted by it until the final days of the Horus Heresy and beyond.

rage that swamped their hearts, and the steel at their side and the bolts in their weapons were their gift to the foe.

They swept into the packed ranks of monsters and Traitors as Hamonah's powerful vox speakers took up the chant, weapons held high and voices raised, and the enemy recoiled. Blades flashed and guns roared as the Blood Angels tore into the stunned enemy and threw them back, for a short moment they forgot their despair and rage and fought for their lives with the skill and valour Sanguinius had instilled in them. The head of the Word Bearers Sorcerer-centurion in the dust at his feet, Archein Jannus gave the order and the engines of those armoured vehicles still able to move came to life once more with a roar that echoed that of the warriors around them. Battered, bloodied but unbroken, the Blood Angels began to move forwards once more.

Sectors 05η – 08Δ: The Wrath of Angels

Madness, hatred and rage ruled the field of battle, hanging heaviest at the centre, where the Angel had fallen to earth. Near 50,000 of the sons of Sanguinius had stood close witness to his fall, with few of those able to tame the all-encompassing rage that flooded their minds. All pretence at strategy had fallen away, leaving only a sea of slaughter and death. The identity of those fighting, be they monster or Legionary, was hidden by blood and gore from the slain. At such close proximity to Sanguinius' failure, even the greatest heroes of the Legion had been overwhelmed, and those leaders that still tried to keep order among their brethren were few and far between. What had begun as a battle had become little more than a drawn-out massacre, with only a matter of time remaining before the disorganised Blood Angels were worn down and killed.

Emerging from the hidden depths of the Cathedral of the Mark was an endless procession of nightmares and legends, given form by the will of the dark gods whose thrones rested within. While new horrors continued to swamp the battlefield, there could be no hope for the main host of the IXth Legion, no chance to regroup or to mount a counter-attack, only a drawn out and futile death. On the far left, the flow of horrors emerging from the twisted woods had slowed to a trickle, but a horde beyond easy count still made its way unhindered across the open wastes that lay before the ill-aspected cathedral. In their path lay the heart of Sanguinius' host, spread out across a dozen kilometres of wasteland and engaged in a sprawling, brutal melee that left them easy prey to any new foe. Yet despite the will of dark gods and fallen Primarchs, there were many among the ranks of the Blood Angels that still held to the will to fight.

Great fountains of tainted soil and broken bestial bodies blossomed across the battlefield, followed by the distant report of artillery cannon and long range missiles. The flow of twisted creatures advancing from the blasphemous cathedral was thrown into disarray as explosions tore into the tightly packed mass that threatened the centre of the Blood Angels host. Elai Jannus had finally succeeded in breaking through the Word Bearers to gain position on the high ground of the right flank, throwing a cordon of blackened Blood Angels around the vulnerable artillery carriages and Deredeo class Dreadnoughts as they unleashed a storm of fire upon the enemy horde. Each shell was their revenge, an embodiment of the hate they bore the foe, and with each salvo, the surrounding Blood Angels roared their anger at the brooding sky above. All about them in the ash-shrouded gloom, the Word Bearers and their foul allies gathered, each attack claiming more of the dwindling company, but each death bought time for yet another volley, yet another blow struck at fate's cruel design. Each of those in that company of death swore to exact a high price for their blood, to wrest a final chance for victory from disaster, and marked their armour in the Baalite fashion, a cross of blood on their ash-stained battle plate.

The enemy advance suddenly collapsed as the rain of explosive shells swept the nearest sectors, leaving behind only churned wastes and shattered fragments of the nightmare host. Into this empty space stormed the main force of the Blood Angels, near 40,000 post-human warriors now driven only by a mindless rage and desire to kill, seeking new prey on which to sate their dark hunger. For the first time since the fall of Sanguinius, the Blood Angels gained ground on the enemy, the very blood-lust the foe had wielded against them now working in their favour.

As a single ravening mass, they turned upon the scattered Daemon host and tore into it with a savage fury, leaving little in their wake but gore-spattered ruin. Pursuing the enemy into the very teeth of the rolling artillery bombardment, seeking to bleed the enemy even as shrapnel screamed around them and fire blossomed amid their ranks, the Blood Angels were pulled inexorably towards the profane temple that waited on the far horizon.

Driven by an insatiable hunger for blood and death that they could not quench, the Blood Angels cut a path towards the gates of the Cathedral of the Mark in an action that cannot be called a battle. The brutal slaughter that took place there under that accursed sky had no purpose other than death, no honour or glory was to be found in the base struggles that took place in the churned mud and ash, only a crude satisfaction in blood spilt for its own sake. Their path was marked by a trail of craters and torn corpses as the artillery blasted a path forwards, but with each passing minute the number of guns giving voice to their fury diminished, the enemy slowly overwhelming the isolated artillery train on the far right. After what seemed to those present an agonisingly drawn out eternity, the forces of the worn and scattered Blood Angels reached the vast cathedral.

The final inevitable bloodbath, the gore-spattered culmination of Horus' plans for the IXth Legion was to begin. The Blood Angels would be broken forever, the survivors rendered into something at once both more and infinitely less than that which Sanguinius had hoped to mould them into. This was to be the end, the final act of a tragedy Horus had planned years before, a script that had so far been followed to the letter. Yet one player in the drama, one the Daemonic playwrights considered finished, had a final role to play.

Sectors 01α and 10θ:
An End and a Beginning

As the crimson host swept down upon the sprawling fortified cathedral, a riotous mass of berserkers rather than the disciplined army that they had once been, Sanguinius' Legion came face to face with the greatest monsters on the visage of Signus Prime. Upon the walls of the cathedral were the warriors of the Unseen Hand, the Word Bearers 8th Company, no longer in grey but now daubed in blood and gore. The obscene sigils and proscribed icons proclaimed beyond doubt the corruption of warriors who had once stood as brothers in arms, as much as the panoply of weapons held ready to strike down those to whom they had once sworn eternal loyalty. Interspersed among their ranks and waiting at the foot of the walls were the creatures which, while fouler in outward appearance, were at least spared the taint of betrayal borne by the Word Bearers.

Lost in a red dream of blood and death, the Blood Angels gave no thought to the strength of the foe or the height of the fortifications. They struck the cathedral like a red wave, throwing themselves at the defences heedless of blasts of flame and hails of bolts loosed by the defenders, hacking at the thick walls and vainly attempting to scale them by hand. Those Dreadnoughts among them, alongside Terminators and warriors armed with heavier weapons forced small breaches, feverishly clawing holes in the fortifications or breaking down smaller side gates, but each such breach was quickly sealed. In some cases, the enemy simply filled the gaps with bodies, the horrors that defended the fortress throwing themselves to their deaths with glee, while in other places, the walls excreted toxic compounds to seal gaps and smother intruders. Even the very walls became weapons, extruding blades and even crude fleshy arms to keep the IXth Legion at bay.

The base of the walls thronged with frenzied warriors and corpses, some of the fallen Blood Angels were held upright in the press long after their deaths. There were no retreats or attempts to regroup, merely a mindless throng that beat and rent the defences even as they died, those few detachments that resisted the urge to run wild desperately attempting to support their brothers with close range support fire. Hundreds of the IXth Legion fell in the first assault and the barbs and bolts of the foe atop the fortifications claimed dozens more with each passing moment. Veteran warriors who had walked upon some of the most renowned battlefields of the Great Crusade, winning honours without number, perished in the mud of Signus, their dignity stripped away by the schemes of Daemons and Traitors.

Such carnage would have broken any sane army or force less twisted by hatred and blind fury, but the Blood Angels that screamed and flailed beneath the walls were no longer an army, but an inchoate mob. In this ultimate test, it would not be their legendary discipline or skill at arms that would carry them to victory, but the unnatural fury that lay hidden within them, the very flaw that Sanguinius had laboured long to suppress. The great gates of the cathedral, standing a dozen metres tall and bound in iron that glowed red as though fresh from the forge, were torn from their mountings by a battered Leviathan Dreadnought whose vox unit emitted a constant bass roar of wordless enmity. That unnamed Ancient paid for that small victory with his life, as a behemoth of churning, boneless limbs and rippling scaled flesh filled the gap, its claw-tipped arms puncturing the Dreadnought's sarcophagus and sending a tide of amniotic fluid streaming across the gateway. The creature itself suffered no less an ignominious fate, as the Blood Angels that followed in the Ancient's wake swarmed over it and tore it apart, some feasting on its tainted flesh even as it cried out in ecstatic pain.

With the gate breached and the Blood Angels loose in the halls, hell truly came to Signus Prime. Every passageway ran with gore, every tower and hall was packed with struggling, clawing, biting forms, while warriors in stained and battered crimson armour fed upon the fallen. Archein Maulgrehn of the 11th Company, rendered near unrecognisable by the foul blood coating his face, stood high upon the walls killing and casting the corpses of the fallen down as he laughed. A

The Scarlet Liberty

At its height, such was the state of the battle and of the Primarch himself that plans were put in place for the utter destruction of Signus Prime. At the direct orders of First Captain Raldoron and Azkaellon of the Sanguinary Guard, the heavy cruiser *Scarlet Liberty* entered geo-stationary orbit above the battlefield. At reception of a prearranged code signal the *Scarlet Liberty* would initiate a full barrage of nova cannon shells and rad-phage munitions, annihilating all life and structures within a radius of at least 100 kilometres. This was a plan of last resort, for it was unlikely that anything would survive – the bombardment would mean the end of the Daemons and Blood Angels both. Yet despite this, and perhaps due to the influence of the strange malaise unleashed by the Daemon general, it was felt by the surviving commanders of the Legion that this was preferable to the enemy claiming victory or their tainted brothers surviving to rejoin the Legion.

The fearsome panoply of weapons held aboard the *Scarlet Liberty* could not easily target the Cathedral of the Mark from high orbit, as the unknown sorcery of those that dwelled within that baleful edifice contaminated any target lock and veiled it from remote observation. An alternative solution was found; a targeting beacon taken from the armouries of the *Red Tear* would have to be transported directly to the target zone by an infiltration team and defended long enough to establish a solid lock. A simple saturation bombardment was deemed too unreliable for proper destruction of the enemy and contaminated allied troops – destruction of all forces under arms currently active on the planet as well as key structures had to be assured. Taking command of a Storm Eagle, Raldoron and a picked unit of veterans undertook to personally deliver the beacon, blasting a path through the swarms of winged fiends in the tumultuous skies above Signus Prime.

The Storm Eagle deposited them a distance from the cathedral, though it is unlikely it would have made it so far were it not for the heroics of Elai Jannus and the small contingent that still held out on the far right flank. Anti-aircraft fire from the Mortis pattern Dreadnoughts and vehicles, even as the position was being overrun, is all that preserved that craft from being torn from the skies. Yet despite the sacrifices of both Raldoron and others, whose valour allowed them to breach the cathedral itself, their actions would later be overshadowed by the arrival of the Primarch and the *Scarlet Liberty* being recalled to offensive operations in orbit. Despite this, Raldoron and his men would still play a decisive role in the battle, serving to assist the Primarch in the final confrontation with Signus Prime's usurpers.

lone Centurion of the 271st Company and stragglers from the main advance held a position by the outer gates, pleading with their brothers to renounce their madness to no avail, while others less consumed by insanity focused their ire upon the Word Bearers, hunting them through the fortress with frightening determination. For a span of minutes and an eternity, fighting raged within the walls of the cathedral, a slaughter unbound by reason, not revenge for the wrongs committed against them, but killing only for the red, euphoric joy of death.

Once the timeless frenzy abated there were no more warp-spawned creatures left, no Word Bearers and no fallen citizens of Signus, only broken and unrecognisable corpses, all rendered equal by the torment inflicted upon them. Only in the highest tower, where the dark overlords of Signus waited, watching over the madness in silence, did an enemy lurk. Yet, even as the Blood Angels gathered in the blood-soaked halls of the Cathedral of the Mark, they saw in each other new prey. Every past slight or momentary jealousy flared in memories of the surviving warriors and the dark fury that had been kindled in their hearts recast brothers as mortal foes. Blades were raised anew, new battle-lines drawn as comrades squared off against each other. This would be the final battle of the Blood Angels, the conquest of their last and greatest foe in a bitter victory. Had the Legion been left to this state, allowed to claim victory in such a barbaric fashion, it is likely that the survivors would never recover and remain forever in the thrall of their rage. Such a fate was not to be, for even as darkness closed in upon the soul of the Legion, a new cry was taken up on the walls and the high towers. White wings were sighted in the sky – Sanguinius had returned from death and came at last to set right the scales of justice.

The skies above the Cathedral of the Mark suddenly bloomed in sickly sunlight as the Great Angel, whole and hale once more, rose above the walls on his wide wings to cast an ominous shadow across the conflict below. Every face on the battlefield turned to watch, even as they raised their arms to strike at their brothers, transfixed by the sight of the fallen Primarch returned to glory. For a moment, the boiling anger stilled and receded, weapons were lowered and a brief peace settled over the crimson-stained cathedral grounds as Sanguinius bought for his sons a short reprieve from the dark fate planned for them. From on-high, the Great Angel stooped upon the high towers of the cathedral, his sword silver-bright in the sudden sunlight as it slashed a new opening in the tower's sanctum. Amidst a rain of glass and stone shards, the Angel arrived at the place pre-ordained for the final confrontation, the last and first battle for the soul of his Legion.

A Laurel of Ash and Regret

The final stage was set and made ready, and with the arrival of the Great Angel all of the players were in place. Here waited the lithe, horned giant that now ruled over the corpse-kingdom of Signus, as well as the bronze-armoured fiend that served as general of its armies, the same monster that had brought the winged Primarch low. The battle that followed has since passed into legend, though those few to witness it in person have spoken little of the exact details, yet its results would change the course of the greater war and haunt the IXth Legion and its descendants for as long as they yet existed.

Resolved now to the fight, the Great Angel held nothing back and matched his silver sword against the hell-forged axe of his nemesis, tearing apart the apex of the tower in their struggle. It was a duel that had been fought before and would be fought again, always at the crux of history and always its outcome would shape the future of the galaxy. Ka'bhanda was a fearsome foe, towering in stature and fitted with a panoply the equal of the finest arms and armour of mortal manufacture. Worse yet, the bronze-armoured monster well remembered the last time it had crossed blades with the Primarch, leaving the Angel broken in the dirt at its feet. Yet Sanguinius had not been lessened by his defeat, but rather made stronger. The doubt that had held him back, his worries over Horus' betrayal and his Legion's curse, were distilled into a cold resolve to see the dark rulers of Signus brought to their knees. The jaws of the trap set by Horus had closed, but the teeth had found no hold and now the hurt was to be repaid tenfold. The gleeful rage and martial pride of the Daemon general Ka'bhanda was matched by the Angel Sanguinius' need to avenge the sacrifices his sons had made while he lay in torpor, for each of which he cut his ire into the Daemon's crimson-furred hide.

Historia Terra Requem

An Angel's Repose

At the furthest edge of the battlefield, the wreck of the *Red Tear* had become a graveyard. Each of its halls and passageways were choked with corpses, for the defenders had fought almost to the last man and claimed a dozen lives for each of their own fallen. Barbiel, the crimson stain of his armour as much his own life's blood as it was the colour of his Legion, and the last few dozen defenders stood at the gates of the inner holds. Within lay the wounded Primarch and those tending him, weakened and vulnerable to his enemies as no Primarch had ever been before. Knowing this, the Crimson Paladins, Custodians and warriors of the Legion that stood in their sire's defence offered their lives freely, fighting with a fury that surpassed the Daemonic rage inflicted upon them.

The minutes bought with the lives of the defenders of the fallen battleship had granted the Librarians and Apothecaries enough time to stir the Primarch from his torpor, breaking the hold of Signus Prime's foul overlords on his mind and soul. The winged Primarch awoke to the sounds of battle and the dying cries of his sons, and at the threshold of his chambers lay the bodies of those fallen in his defence, their blood spilled in his halls and the wounds inflicted upon him still fresh. What dark thoughts and evil dreams must have plagued the Primarch while he lay caught between life and death will likely never be known, but that his sanity was tested is undoubted. Waking to the nightmare that was the situation aboard the *Red Tear*, it would surprise few that, had Sanguinius been affected much like his sons – reduced to a bestial creature of rage and controlled by a dark hunger for blood, he would become a monster much like those his Legion struggled to overcome.

Fortunately for the Imperium, Sanguinius passed through the crucible of Signus intact, if not entirely unharmed, and once he awoke it was the Traitors and malformed beasts of Signus against which his wrath would be spent. Passing through the embattled halls of the *Red Tear*, Sanguinius put the enemy to flight, his cold dispassionate fury serving to bring his sons to their senses and rally the flagging defenders. His flagship secure, the Great Angel took to the wing, his path cleared by Custodes Equinox interceptors and Blood Angels Xiphon fighters, a challenge to answer and an injury to repay, and as he flew even the ash-laden clouds dared not bar his passage.

The winged Primarch exhausted his regret on the creature that dared to threaten his Legion and upon its vile counterpart he bestowed pain in equal measure to that which it had dared inflict upon the people of the Imperium. Sanguinius left the Daemon overlords of Signus in ruin equal to that which he himself had endured, crippled in body and broken in spirit, one final act of butchery to end the nightmare that had been the Signus campaign. A grim mirror of the first fateful duel, the battle ended with Ka'bandha fallen and those daemon lords that conspired to rule Signus alongside it torn asunder, the Primarch's revenge complete and a bitter hatred that would mark the Legion henceforth established beyond repair. Yet though the Great Angel rejoiced at the victory that had been won against the odds, he also lamented the form which it had been forced to take. For even in victory a taint had been place upon his Legion, one which would never fade.

The final screams of the creatures as they were consumed in warp-fire signalled the end of the battle for Signus, but not the end of the campaign begun there. Those few

Historia Terra Regnum

A Red Angel

As the Primarch and the Daemon general Ka'bhanda fought, others struggled in their lee. For though the infamous duel between monster and angel would forever dominate the legends of that day, the actions of those that stood in the shadows would prove to be just as decisive. History has often painted the Horus Heresy as a struggle between giants, of battling Primarchs and warring devils, but to forget the heroics of those warriors brave enough or foolish enough to stand in the path of these titans is at best misguided.

Though it was to be Sanguinius himself that would deal the final blow to the creatures that had claimed lordship of Signus, there are those that claim it was not he that put an end to the rage that claimed his sons. That role fell to an unnamed Legionary, a single warrior willing to sacrifice himself for the good of his Legion and Primarch, knowing that history would never remember his actions nor record his deeds. Though notably tight-lipped in regards to Signus and the events of that campaign, the Blood Angels have been known to refer to this individual as the Red Angel, though the significance of the name is likely to remain a mystery to outsiders.

This Red Angel, delivered to the tower of the Cathedral of the Mark by Raldoron and his cadre, was able to contain the rage-font, freeing the Blood Angels from its grip at the cost of his own sanity. What became of him afterwards is not known, no Red Angel is listed in any roster of the IXth Legion, nor in any list of casualties. There is only one further reference to such a warrior in all the known chronicles of the Horus Heresy, a reference made in records taken from Horus' retinue in the last years of the war. If this is indeed the same figure, then it is likely that his role in both the civil war and the Blood Angels' own internal struggle was far greater than is currently known.

warp-born monsters that had not already fallen before the Blood Angels melted away, vanished as though they had never been, leaving behind only the destruction they had wrought and the corpses of their pawns. In orbit, the corpse-ships that had besieged the fleet unravelled, becoming little more than scrap and rubble, and the dark shroud that had fallen across the stars frayed and dissolved before their eyes, revealing a tapestry of distant lights whose arrangement hinted at a passage of time that did not match that of the fleet's malfunctioning chronometers. Now uninhibited, the vox arrays aboard the ships flared into life once again and the armada regrouped in earnest, with news of the Great Angel's survival and triumph spreading like an unexpected dawn, soured only by the subtle shades of discontent for the actions that had brought them to this point.

All across the wide expanse of the Signus system, Sanguinius ordered that his sons remove every trace they had ever walked upon those corrupted worlds, down to the last shard of armour and errant shell casing. No brother of the Legion was to be left behind, and the Apothecaries with their macabre servitor drones spent many days scouring the plains of Signus Prime to locate all of the fallen. Most were found in the vast drifts of dead scattered across the central sectors, while small huddles of corpses marked where brothers in arms had fallen back to back in forgotten last stands. On the far flanks almost nothing remained of the artillery train, Elias Jannus and his company dead to a man with only the armless, limping form of the Dreadnought Hamonah still booming his chant through crackling, burned-out vox units to mark their passing. Many other martyrs fell forgotten and unremembered in the desolate landscape, with none to recall their valour.

Even among the survivors there were few left untouched by injury, with almost every member of the Legion carrying some bloody memento of the battle away with them. Not only had the war itself and the weapons of the enemy proved deadly, but the corrupted nature of the planet itself now sought to extinguish the Blood Angels. Strange infections and plagues swept through the weakened survivors, leaving many quarantined on the surface lest they reach the contingents aboard the ships of the fleet and cause further suffering and death. In the leftmost sectors of the battlefield, where the mutated forest had collapsed into a mire of decaying sludge, the situation was even more dire. Even stolid battle-automata and armoured Dreadnoughts were corroded to little more than scrap by the vile morass, and those few corpses found were unrecognisable, so corrupted that even their gene-seed could not be returned to the Legion. Indeed, only two warriors are known to have survived in that morass; three days after the siege of the Cathedral of the Mark, Centurion Crohne emerged from the murk covered in wounds, his throat ruined by the fumes and dragging the still-functional torso of Magos Domina Shurol.

Such was the mass of seriously wounded in the aftermath of the conflict that many of those working to search and clear the battlefield numbered among the walking wounded, nursing injuries that would have

incapacitated lesser warriors. However, worse even than the physical wounds borne by many of the Blood Angels were those that had been burned into their souls, especially among those that had given in to the terrible rage that had afflicted them during the fighting. Some would never recover, and a number of warriors known to have survived the battle suddenly disappear from the Legion, likely granted the Emperor's mercy by their battle-brothers instead of being forced to live the rest of their years chained as ravening beasts. Others, whose deeds under thrall of the chains of rage had brought them some manner of dishonour, found themselves the object of pity and shame, a fate harder to bear for such proud warriors than simple injury.

Archeins Maulgrehn of the 11th and Amit of the 5th, whose bloody rampages had been witnessed by many and stood complicit in the disappearance of the Space Wolves contingent, were but two of the senior officers that had been at the forefront of the madness. The quick descent of these officers into the grip of berserk fury led to the wholesale collapse of the front lines as the warriors followed the lead of their commanders. Despite this collapse in discipline, no official sanction was placed upon the officers in question, though the disappointment of their Primarch cut deeper than any rebuke. Indeed, the Primarch's distant and cold demeanour struck at the morale of the entire Legion, and left a pall over all that had been accomplished and overshadowed the Blood Angels' heroic actions. Even though the battle had ended in victory for the IXth Legion, it was hollow and empty; a triumph whose laurels were ashes and regret.

Of Angels and Daemons

Exactly 51 days after the Battle for Signus Prime, a new sun bloomed on the surface of that benighted world as the *Red Tear* fired her vast plasma thruster array and the hastily repaired wreck shuddered skywards. Much like the Legion she sheltered, the wounded battleship would never be the same again, for the damage wrought upon her could be covered over with new plating and patched, but never truly made right. The *Red Tear* slowly limped towards the Signus system's Mandeville point, sowing a chain of automated warning beacons in her wake, each primed to ward off Imperial craft in perpetuity, and within the wounded battleship, Sanguinius brooded. The winged Primarch, secluded within his once golden sanctum, its halls shattered by the *Red Tear's* fall from orbit, was tormented by the cause of his Legion's misfortune, the betrayal of his brother and the dark portents he foresaw for the future of the Imperium and his own sons.

For all of their sacrifices, the Blood Angels had found nothing but pain and loss in Signus, and when they left, Sanguinius ordered that it be made as though they had never set foot on those accursed worlds. The records of their campaign were sealed away, the various cogitator imprints and official logs collected and locked within a triple-shielded vault, with a detachment of the Keruvim sworn solely to its protection. The individual warriors and captains of the Legion were bound by oath to the Primarch and their own shame not to speak of it, and no battle honour hangs in any hall or on any ceremonial armour of the IXth Legion to commemorate the campaign. The failure of the IXth Legion to save Signus would be hidden from the galaxy at large, along with the details of the malevolence that they had overcome there, lest the truth tear apart the Imperial Truth and the foundations of the Emperor's dream for the future.

Sanguinius could not yet fathom the true scale of the betrayal that had brought him to Signus, the true darkness that rose like an obsidian sea to swamp the faltering light of the Emperor and His fragile artificial Truth. He knew only that Horus had sent him to Signus to die, that his brother had sought his death for no reason he could yet discern and orchestrated the destruction of Signus and the death of millions just to lure him there. What he could not know was that the civil war had already raged for five long years, that the unity of the Primarchs had long since been shattered and broken, and that Terra itself lay under threat of invasion. Even after the trials he and his Legion had passed through, his actions were still flawed and in vain, his heroics wasted and all his hopes for the future set upon the knife edge of fate.

A Devil's Contract

The Battle for Signus Prime exacted a heavy price for victory. Of over 50,000 Legionaries committed to the final battle, one in every five did not return, and almost all were wounded to a greater or lesser degree. 10,000 Blood Angels fell, a toll never before paid for a single victory by the Legion. Worse, many of the fallen had been so corrupted by the foe and its weapons that their gene-seed could not be recovered. Of those that survived, many of the wounded had lost limbs or sustained crippling internal damage, which for lesser warriors would have ended their days on the frontlines, but for those of the Legiones Astartes merely delayed their return. In all, little more than 22,000 warriors of those that fought in the battle remained fully combat capable.

Of those armoured assets sent into battle, almost a third had been destroyed, though it was likely that a small percentage of those might be returned to service using parts taken from the most badly damaged wrecks. Of all of the squadrons sent into the hell that had been the Battle for Signus Prime, the ones that had fared best had been the obsolete Kratos support tanks, whose heavy armour and close support weapons had enabled them to survive in the melee, while faster, more specialised vehicles had been isolated and torn apart. In the wake of the fighting, the only class of vehicle to increase in numbers were Dreadnoughts, with an unprecedented number of injured transferred to the half-death of a Dreadnought sarcophagus. This influx would become known as the Black Tithe, for many of those who fell on Signus Prime brought the rage that had suffused them into their new half-lives, where it would frequently wreak havoc on the battlefield.

The IXth Legion was effectively rendered combat ineffective. While those still able worked to clear the worlds of Signus of traces of the Legion's presence, the fleet's medicae facilities struggled to cope with the wounded and the adepts of the armoury worked without rest to salvage what they could from the battlefield. Yet it would not be until long after the Legion's departure from Signus that the Blood Angels would be at full strength again.

The armada hung in the skies of Signus Prime like a constellation of waning stars, uncertain and irresolute. The Great Angel, having received fragmented broadcasts calling on all loyal forces to return to Terra, sought a route to his father's side only to find all paths set with fel guardians. Even the very substance of the Warp sought to bar his passage, churning and boiling under the gaze of the fleet's surviving Navigators, as though some great power in its depths wished the Blood Angels to remain trapped at Signus. Sanguinius was loathe to risk what remained of his Legion simply for the sake of his own pride, delaying action as his warriors completed their scouring of Signus and isolating himself within his sanctum amidst dreams of augury and portent. As before, it was the faith and determination of his sons that finally spurred the winged Primarch to action.

Small shrines set up by individual Legionaries for the fallen had sprung up in hidden compartments across the fleet, and larger memorials, like that raised for Archein Jannus and the martyrs of the 202nd Company, could be found in the depths of the armoury guarded by Hamonah and the other Ancients. The practice halls rang with the sound of combat, Aster Crohne and other veterans developing and refining new styles of combat based on their harrowing experiences on Signus Prime, while the inner circle, warriors such as First Captain Raldoron, appeared on ships across the fleet, fortifying the resolve of the Legion with his presence in lieu of the Angel himself. All throughout the Legion, the Blood Angels were readying themselves for the dark years to come, and though the taint released upon them at Signus could never be erased, it could not extinguish the noble spirit kindled in the Legion by Sanguinius. Witnessing the devotion and determination of his sons, Sanguinius at last gave the order, committing the Blood Angels to the Horus Heresy on the side of the Emperor.

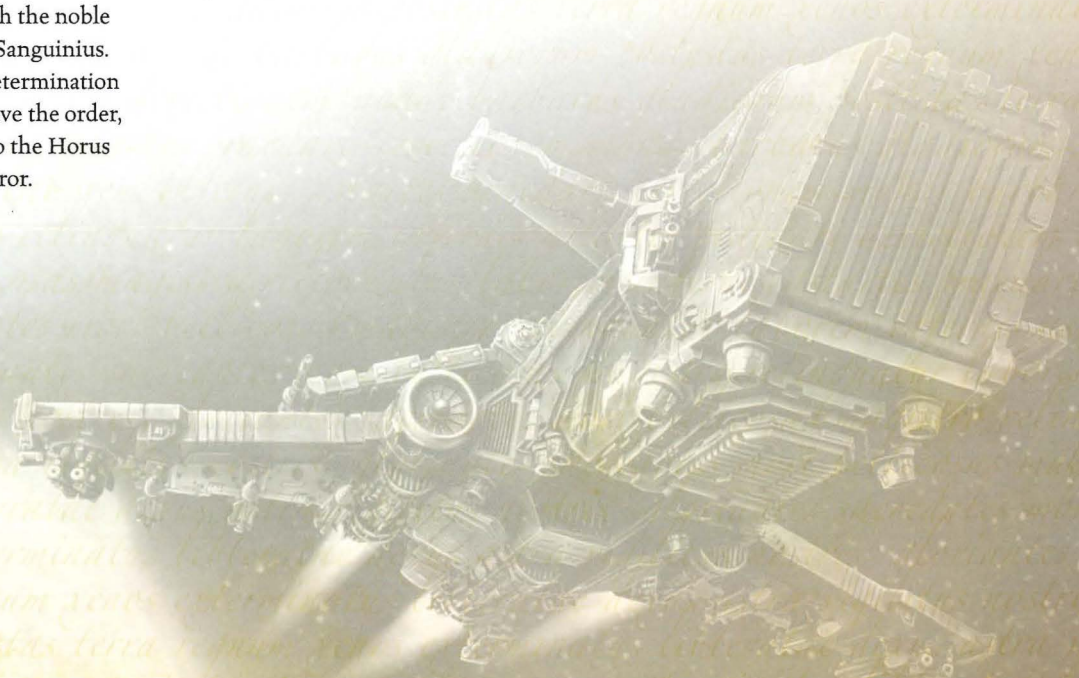
Astra Incognito

In the wake of the Blood Angels' withdrawal, Signus vanished from the annals of history. No modern star charts record its position, no chronicle lists its fate and only the most desperate or foolhardy Rogue Trader seeks its treasures. The Blood Angels have done their best to erase the system from existence, both as a threat to the Imperium and as a stain upon their own honour. The beacons they left as they withdrew do not list the system's name, but simply ward away passing ships, and given the sheer destructive nature of some of the viral and chemical weapons unleashed during the Horus Heresy, there are few willing to disregard such a warning for the sake of simple curiosity. For all intents and purposes, the Signus system ceased to exist after Sanguinius departed.

Only one official expedition has ever been launched to rediscover the treasure trove of ship hulks, abandoned hive cities and Daemonic relics that must sit untouched in Signus. With what few fragmented references remained for its location and an escort of heavily armed cruisers the fleet departed Anvillus in good spirits, its captains sure of their success. Yet after six months of no word, a flotilla of Blood Angels battle barges and strike cruisers appeared at Anvillus. They delivered word of the fleet's demise, supposedly from a Warp translation disaster, and a message from the lords of Baal, "*Some mistakes should not be revisited, some graves should not be unearthed. Let that which sleeps eternal lay, do not venture where even angels fear to tread*".

The vaults of heaven were torn open as the armada set forth at last, yawning rifts into the Empyrean swallowing the tightly formed wedges of void craft. They departed in combat formation, for with the Warp in flux and Horus' legions prowling the stars in search of them, they expected nothing less than a running battle all the way to the gates of Terra. Indeed, it was likely that all they could achieve was to wound the Warmaster's Traitor Legions as grievously as they could while making the attempt. Instead, as they breached the threshold of aetheric space and entered the depths of the Warp, they found a glaring beacon waiting for them – not the comforting glow of the Astronomicon, but a stark new light in the void. With no hesitation, the IXth Legion swung about on course, striking out for this new light, for having already confronted the malevolence that sat at the heart of Horus' rebellion what now could threaten their resolve?

Yet what awaited them was a threat more subtle and insidious than anything contrived by Horus; the IXth Legion had arrived at Imperium Secundus, at the edge of the abyss that was the Age of Darkness. Everything was about to change.



The Betrayal at Chondax

"All Emperors are liars, all tyrants are thieves."

Chogorian proverb from pre-Compliance era

Chondax is not a name mentioned when scholars speak of the great turning points of the Horus Heresy. It does not resonate with the same infamy as the massacres at Isstvan or Calth, where hundreds of thousands of souls met their end, nor does it hold the strategic significance of the battles for Beta-garmon or Tallarn. Yet it is at Chondax that the course of the Horus Heresy was decided, not in fire and thunder, but in quiet, forgotten bloodshed. Here, Horus had his first setback. His first defeat. Here, both the Alpha Legion and the White Scars chose an unexpected path and defied the expectations of a galaxy at war. Here, the slaughter ended and the war began.

The Chondax incident finds its origins in the wake of the Ullanor Crusade, where the Emperor and Horus fought side by side for the last time. The vast Orkoid empire of Urlakk Urg was cast down and shattered for all time and Horus proclaimed Warmaster of all the Imperium, the Emperor's champion and commander of the Great Crusade as the Master of Mankind withdrew to Terra. Some say that this was the day Horus' heart turned cold, that the departure of his Father sparked the embers of rebellion within him. Whether such accusations hold any truth or not, it is in the wake of the world-spanning macro-Triumph that followed, a celebration of Horus' new title, that the foundations of the Heresy were undoubtedly laid.

In the ruins of the last great threat to Mankind's dominance, and the last real challenge to the Great Crusade, Horus drafted a number of orders. Regiments of the Imperial Army and Titan Legions were re-organised and redeployed at his command. Those units whose loyalty to the new Warmaster was absolute saw themselves shifted to key strategic positions, while those with little personal loyalty to Horus were posted to the most bloody of the Great Crusade's war zones. Even his brother Primarchs were not immune to these machinations, with those known as confidants of the Warmaster and those with long-held grudges against their father finding themselves granted the most opportune conquests, while those who might be considered rivals were sent to the far reaches of the galaxy. As we have already seen, the Blood Angels were removed from the seat of the Imperium, sent to distant Signus to meet their fate. The Lion, Roboute Guilliman and others still were found campaigns to wage far from the centres of Imperial power.

The Unbalanced Scales

Much of the work you now hold has been made possible by a document known as the *Unbalanced Scales*. The volume is a collection of handwritten notes, coded dispatches and picter images, all charting the Alpha Legion's course throughout the Horus Heresy. It is a cypher that lays bare the secrets of the Alpha Legion. In all probability, everything upon its pages is a lie.

The *Unbalanced Scales* is not a result of Imperial intelligence operations or my own research, it is of a rather more mysterious pedigree. It came into the possession of the Terran Archives in the years following the Traitor remnant's retreat from Terra in the final years of the Horus Heresy. No catalogue entry or scribe-adept records the exact date of its inclusion in the Archives, and only a single note regarding its arrival has been discovered. That note reads simply: *In the service of Truth* Ω. Despite this troublesome origin, the servants of Malcador, who retain much influence in the wake of their master's great sacrifice, have assured us of its veracity.

The *Unbalanced Scales* lists troop deployments, battle honours, personnel files and much more. With it, the full involvement of the Alpha Legion in the Chondax Engagement and hundreds of other battles can finally be fully documented – if its contents are to be trusted. However, considering the utter lack of other sources regarding the secretive XXth Legion, there has been little other choice. All information taken from the *Unbalanced Scales* has been verified as much as is possible through Imperium sources, though some details remain impossible to fully confirm and a number of key discrepancies remain. Yet when dealing with the XXth Legion, a force whose most feared weapon was that of lies and misinformation, I fear that there will never be a final and absolute truth regarding their activities.

Unlike some of his brothers, Jaghatai Khan, was one of the Primarchs that the new Warmaster counted as a ready ally, whose rough honesty and disdain for subterfuge put him out of suspicion as a rival to the great destiny Horus nurtured in the dark corners of his soul. The Khagan was a warrior, pure and simple; he had few ambitions of empire and many of his fellow Primarchs overlooked both his skill and the great deeds he and his Legion had performed in the name of the Great Crusade. Yet the Khagan was also staunchly loyal to the Emperor and a warrior whose oaths of loyalty would not be easily forsaken. Given the nature of the White Scars, whose reputation for self-sufficiency and obscure codes of honour was well established, any attempt to suborn them openly was as likely to make enemies of them as it was to bind them to the Warmaster's cause. Instead, Horus opted for a more subtle plan, unwilling to consign his old friend to the bloody fate he had in store for those he had deemed obstacles in his ascension.

He knew that the Khagan could neither be bribed nor intimidated, as he was a man famous for his wilful and stubborn ways, keenness to travel his own paths, and his Legion likewise kept their own ways and shunned the strictures of standard Imperium doctrine. For the Warmaster, Jaghatai Khan could not be led, but he might be manipulated. He would not respond to either demands or to entreaties, and so he would have to be made to take the path Horus had chosen for him of his own will. To do so, Horus would need to set the stage for such a choice very carefully, lest the horse he wished tamed bolted. He would need to control every factor at play, to close off every avenue that the White Scars had, save for that path which took them to his side. They would have to be removed from the company of the other Legions and taken to a place where only that news which Horus wished them to have might reach them, and be occupied with a war that would satisfy their nomadic urges. The Warmaster had much to achieve, many traps to set and gambits to plan, and the White Scars would need to be preserved from becoming embroiled in these until they were complete.

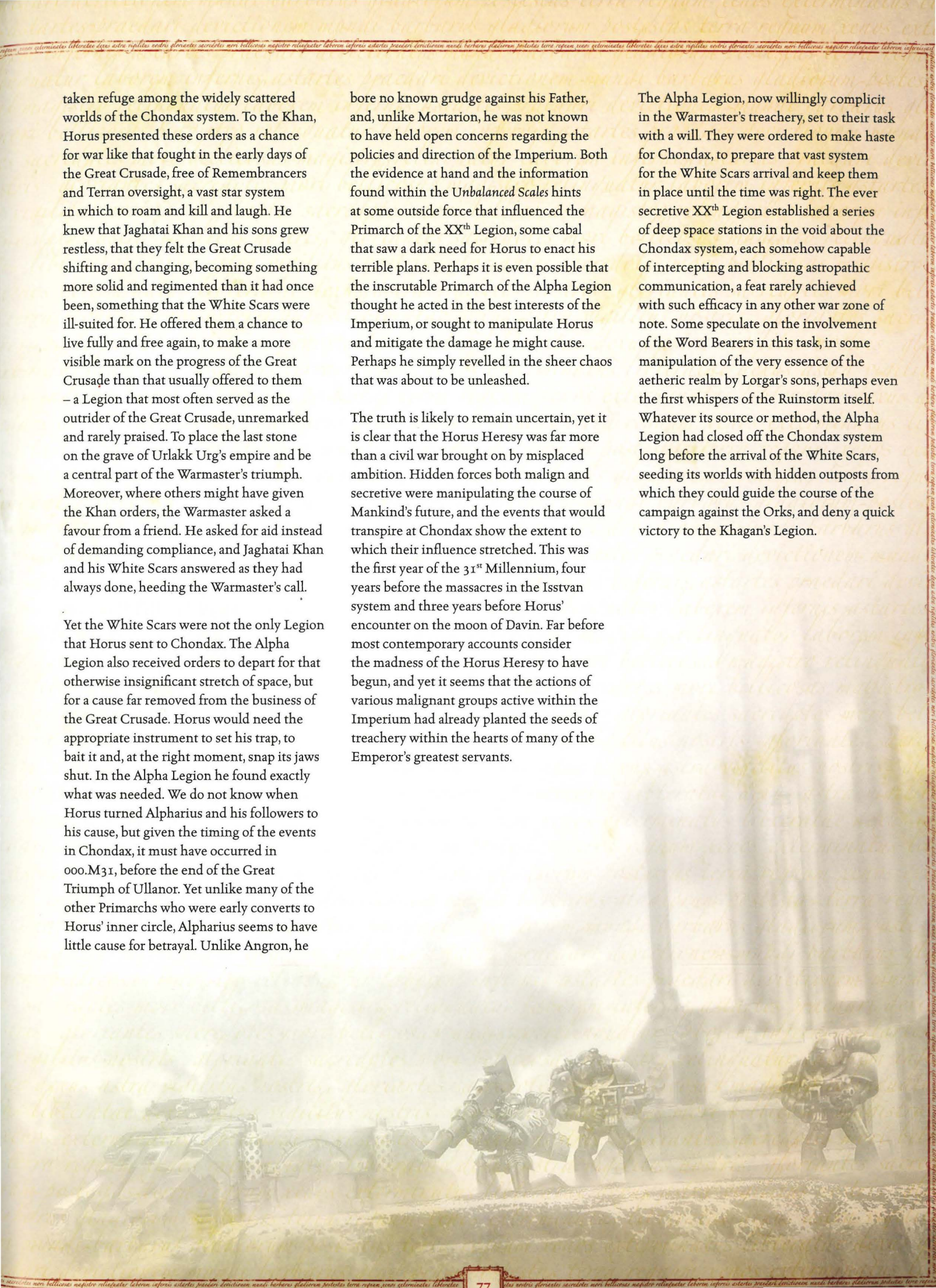
So Horus sent the White Scars to Chondax, an uninhabited system a few short warp-jumps from Ullanor, a place of no real strategic importance and far from any well-travelled warp passages. Here they were to prosecute the last gasps of the victory at Ullanor, hunting down the remnants of Urlakk Urg's greenskin armies which had

taken refuge among the widely scattered worlds of the Chondax system. To the Khan, Horus presented these orders as a chance for war like that fought in the early days of the Great Crusade, free of Remembrancers and Terran oversight, a vast star system in which to roam and kill and laugh. He knew that Jaghatai Khan and his sons grew restless, that they felt the Great Crusade shifting and changing, becoming something more solid and regimented than it had once been, something that the White Scars were ill-suited for. He offered them a chance to live fully and free again, to make a more visible mark on the progress of the Great Crusade than that usually offered to them – a Legion that most often served as the outrider of the Great Crusade, unremarked and rarely praised. To place the last stone on the grave of Urlakk Urg's empire and be a central part of the Warmaster's triumph. Moreover, where others might have given the Khan orders, the Warmaster asked a favour from a friend. He asked for aid instead of demanding compliance, and Jaghatai Khan and his White Scars answered as they had always done, heeding the Warmaster's call.

Yet the White Scars were not the only Legion that Horus sent to Chondax. The Alpha Legion also received orders to depart for that otherwise insignificant stretch of space, but for a cause far removed from the business of the Great Crusade. Horus would need the appropriate instrument to set his trap, to bait it and, at the right moment, snap its jaws shut. In the Alpha Legion he found exactly what was needed. We do not know when Horus turned Alpharius and his followers to his cause, but given the timing of the events in Chondax, it must have occurred in 000.M31, before the end of the Great Triumph of Ullanor. Yet unlike many of the other Primarchs who were early converts to Horus' inner circle, Alpharius seems to have little cause for betrayal. Unlike Angron, he bore no known grudge against his Father, and, unlike Mortarion, he was not known to have held open concerns regarding the policies and direction of the Imperium. Both the evidence at hand and the information found within the *Unbalanced Scales* hints at some outside force that influenced the Primarch of the XXth Legion, some cabal that saw a dark need for Horus to enact his terrible plans. Perhaps it is even possible that the inscrutable Primarch of the Alpha Legion thought he acted in the best interests of the Imperium, or sought to manipulate Horus and mitigate the damage he might cause. Perhaps he simply revelled in the sheer chaos that was about to be unleashed.

The truth is likely to remain uncertain, yet it is clear that the Horus Heresy was far more than a civil war brought on by misplaced ambition. Hidden forces both malign and secretive were manipulating the course of Mankind's future, and the events that would transpire at Chondax show the extent to which their influence stretched. This was the first year of the 31st Millennium, four years before the massacres in the Isstvan system and three years before Horus' encounter on the moon of Davin. Far before most contemporary accounts consider the madness of the Horus Heresy to have begun, and yet it seems that the actions of various malignant groups active within the Imperium had already planted the seeds of treachery within the hearts of many of the Emperor's greatest servants.

The Alpha Legion, now willingly complicit in the Warmaster's treachery, set to their task with a will. They were ordered to make haste for Chondax, to prepare that vast system for the White Scars arrival and keep them in place until the time was right. The ever secretive XXth Legion established a series of deep space stations in the void about the Chondax system, each somehow capable of intercepting and blocking astropathic communication, a feat rarely achieved with such efficacy in any other war zone of note. Some speculate on the involvement of the Word Bearers in this task, in some manipulation of the very essence of the aetheric realm by Lorgar's sons, perhaps even the first whispers of the Ruinstorm itself. Whatever its source or method, the Alpha Legion had closed off the Chondax system long before the arrival of the White Scars, seeding its worlds with hidden outposts from which they could guide the course of the campaign against the Orks, and deny a quick victory to the Khagan's Legion.



Plans within Plans

Much of the information in our possession hints that the Alpha Legion conspired not only with Horus but also with another unknown benefactor. The identity of this sponsor remains a mystery, and it is only through the actions of the Alpha Legion that we can infer their motives. The Alpha Legion were among the first Legions to join the cause of Horus' rebellion, with their involvement in the Chondax Engagement in the first years of the 31st Millennium being the earliest known of their traitorous actions. Yet it is not apparent that Horus made any concerted effort to win their loyalty. Indeed, they were often excluded from key meetings and scorned by other members of the Traitor host. As such, it seems sensible to assume that this unknown benefactor somehow coerced Alpharius into the service of the Warmaster, though what such an association might have to gain from assisting the rebellion is unknown. Few among the powerful in the Imperium reaped much reward from the utter destruction of the Horus Heresy, and most were left badly weakened in its wake. Indeed, it is the Outsider, the xenos and the outcast, who stood to benefit most from the Imperium's weakness. This is a telling fact and a chilling one. For if the Alpha Legion were indeed operating at the behest of some alien faction, who saw in the fall of the Imperium their own ascension then it is certain that those ambitions did not end with Horus' fall.

These preparations were all to set a stage for the subversion of the White Scars. Horus had no intention of causing a battle between Legions to be fought at Chondax, for unlike those later caught in the trap he was to lay at Isstvan V, he had no wish to see the White Scars broken and scattered. Horus had seen to their removal from the events he was about to set in motion. Caged at Chondax they would be unable to intervene at the burning of Prospero, for the Khagan and Magnus the Red were close allies, both outsiders to many of their brothers and both of a mystical inclination, and had he heard of his friend's peril, there was no force that could have stopped the White Scars from descending on Prospero to aid the Thousand Sons. Such a catastrophe was not to Horus' liking. His plans required the Wolves to be bloodied and the Sorcerer's sons betrayed – through such a gambit he strengthened his own hand and weakened those loyal to the Emperor. The Warmaster had merely to wait as his plans unfolded, and when the time was right, he would present Jaghatai Khan with just enough of the truth to satisfy him and lies enough to turn him to the service of the dark empire he sought to create from the corpse of the Imperium.

A Storm on the Horizon (6244 Standard Fractionals before)

When Horus set his seal to the orders that would send the White Scars to Chondax, Jaghatai Khan and a full five Hordes of the White Scars were arrayed at the Triumph Fields of Ullanor. Of the Primarchs at Ullanor, and their meetings and conduct, we have many sources – from the writings of several of the Primarchs themselves to the unnumbered accounts of Remembrancers. Many make little note of the Khan's presence, often choosing to focus their praise on those of his brothers more accustomed to such affairs. Yet where he does appear, it is often significant. For example, he is rarely seen away from his Legion save in the company of certain of his brothers, most often either Horus Lupercal or Magnus of Prospero. Of these meetings, during which it is assumed that Horus presented his brother with the orders to cleanse Chondax, there is no hint of displeasure or upset in the Khagan's comportment. Indeed, many accounts make much of the camaraderie between the two, especially due to its absence in the Khan's other interactions.

Of his meetings with Magnus the Red there is far less recorded, yet it is these that occupy the majority of his time away from the tasks of war and conquest. The two were bound by their status as outsiders among the more charismatic of their brothers and an unlikely alliance had sprung up between the two Legions, one of pragmatic wanderers and the other book-bound scholars. During the great parades of the Triumph, those of the White Scars present marched beside the warriors of Prospero, and in the celebrations that followed the Warmaster's appointment, the two Legions, while often forgotten by the other Legions, were ever at each other's side. It is said by those who knew him that the Khagan favoured Magnus for his honesty and willingness to speak the truth as he saw it despite the threat of censure, and while their views did not always align, his respect did not falter. During the brief sojourn of the Legions on the Triumph Fields of Ullanor, there were many bonds forged between the warriors of Chogoris and Prospero, where few among the great statesman of the Imperium cared to pay witness, an alliance whose import would become plain to many of the great and mighty far too late.

Horus, eager, we assume, to placate his brother and speed his departure on a task that, despite its initial gilding of honour, would likely entail some years of inglorious and arduous combat, granted the Khagan the authority to gather from among those renowned units present at Ullanor whichever he felt best suited to the task ahead. By all accounts it is a task the Khagan set to with a vigour, likely glad to be rid of the pomp and ceremony of the great Triumph. For several months, the Khagan was occupied with the marshalling of his own Legion, including the sending of dispatches to distant Hordes, and the selection of support units. In this regard, the bias of the White Scars towards a mobile style of war is much evident. Indeed, some records imply that, at first, the Khagan was reluctant to attach any non-Legion forces to his fleet. The inclusion of a mechanised cohort of the Saturnyne Rams would seem indicative of this bias, the Rams being known for their elite skills and preference for fast assault over protracted defence. Yet other choices, such as that of a detachment of the dour Charonid siege engineers, stand at odds with the Khan's usual preferences and perhaps speaks of the influence of Horus or some other adviser.

Perhaps the most curious addition to the Chondax fleet is that of a demi-vigil of the Silent Sisterhood. A small detachment had been part of the Ullanor Crusade, but had little involvement in the fighting, save for two encounters with rogue Orkoid psykers that had seen them brought to the front lines. However, the Council of Nikaea, to which the Great Khan had not been summoned, had not yet placed any restrictions on the use of battle-psykers within the Legions, and the White Scars continued to rely on their Stormseers to counter such threats. Some have opined that the reason for the inclusion of the Sisters was less because of their unique abilities and more due to the Terran-made jetbikes issued to one of their vigils, machines for which the White Scars held a noted curiosity. Others have noted the Khan's tendency to recruit advisers from the most unusual places, seeking differing perspectives from his own.

The Chondax Cleansing Fleet

Included here is a transcript of the original roster and writ of authority issued by the Warmaster to Jaghatai Khan for the Chondax campaign. It includes a full listing of the forces allocated to the Khan and, of particular interest to scholars of the Horus Heresy, a condensed set of the official campaign orders.

'This being a roster of those forces bound by oath to the service of the Warmaster's agent, Jaghatai Khan, named executor of his will and chief among his servants in this endeavour, known hereafter as the Chondax Crusade. By order of Horus Lupercal, Master of the XVIth Legion, The Eye of Terra, and Warmaster of the Imperium, this crusade shall devote itself to the prosecution of those goals listed here:

By means of any and all force required, to reduce all enemy strongholds and fastnesses to ruins, to harry and destroy all of his forces and to see each and every stain of his presence obliterated.

To remain at arms within the immediate vicinity of the trinary star system known as Chondax, despite provocation by the enemy or the call of allies, that the grand design of the Warmaster proceed undisturbed.

To give welcome and succour to all declared emissaries of Warmaster Horus Lupercal, and to heed those missives they bear without regard to other authority.

Let no other duty or call to arms supersede this charge, let no warrior rest till the will of the Warmaster is executed in full and his wrath spent to its uttermost extreme.

By the seal and authority of the Warmaster of the Imperium, first servant of the Emperor, on this date [769000.M31], let none hinder these warriors in the execution of their duties on pain of sanction extremis and full redress under Imperial law.'

Crusade Fleet Officer Cadre

Jaghatai Khan, Lord of the Vth Legion, Chosen Emissary of the Warmaster – Commander-in-chief of all Imperium forces assigned to the Chondax war zone.

Calistis Merovin, Knight-Centura of the Silent Sisterhood.

Argus Gygan, Stratigos of the Saturnyne host and commander of 13th Solar Auxilia cohort.

Fleet Contingent

Elements of the White Scars fleet, 472 capital ships, mainly of lighter mass and class, and approximately 600 lesser strike craft and destroyers.

Elements of the Imperial Navy, 21 capital-class craft, including seven macro-ark transport barges, and a further 30 deep range scout craft and destroyers.

A single Optima-malifax class light cruiser of the Silent Sisterhood.

Main Contingent

The Vth Legion – The White Scars

Five Hordes of the White Scars were present at the Triumph of Ullanor, with another three Hordes joining the fleet at Chondax, arriving from campaigns around the Pale Stars via the staging areas of Ryza.

In total, the White Scars force numbered approximately 67,600 Legionaries, including limited armour and other support units, representing over 60 individual Brotherhoods and over two-thirds of the entire Legion.

Unlike most Legions, the White Scars follow no numerical scheme to identify their Hordes, instead marking them only with the name of the Horde's current Noyan-khan. This idiosyncrasy, when combined with the White Scars tradition of its recruits taking a new Chogorian name to replace their old one upon gaining the rank of Legionary, makes them exceedingly difficult to accurately track.

- Krenak Noyan-khan's Horde, part of the Ullanor Crusade, primarily mounted infantry, approximately 7,900 strong.

- Asudai Noyan-khan's Horde, part of the Ullanor Crusade, including a substantial armoured contingent, approximately 7,300 strong.

- Hasik Noyan-khan's Horde, part of the Ullanor Crusade, primarily mounted infantry, approximately 9,800 strong.

- Jemulan Noyan-khan's Horde, part of the Ullanor Crusade, primarily mounted infantry, approximately 8,300 strong.

- Nogai Noyan-khan's Horde, part of the Ullanor Crusade, includes a large proportion of reconnaissance specialists, approximately 9,200 strong.

- Sangjar Noyan-khan's Horde, re-routed from the Yarath Pacification, primarily mounted infantry, approximately 8,600 strong.

- Gansukh Noyan-khan's Horde, re-routed from the Yarath Pacification, includes a large infantry contingent with many heavy weapons, approximately 7,000 strong.

- Orbaatar Noyan-khan's Horde, re-routed from the Thanatos Expedition, one of the few Hordes to include an artillery train, approximately 9,500 strong.

Imperial Army Auxiliary

- 13th Solar Auxilia Cohort – 4,000 void hoplites of the famed Saturnyne Rams regiments. The 13th was one of the few fully mechanised cohorts of the Rams.

- 42nd Seraphine Guard – 8,000 Imperialis Militia troops assigned for garrison duties.

- 8th Fane of the Charonid Sentinels – 2,000 heavily augmented siege engineers and war engines of ancient provenance.

Independent Forces

- One demi-vigil of the Silent Sisterhood – 63 Sisters militant equipped with Erinyes pattern jetbikes.

Of his own Legion, the White Scars, records from the Triumph speak little. As on many occasions, the Vth Legion appears to have slipped past the notice of many chroniclers, yet by their absences we can chart their activities and temperament in those last few months before the Chondax campaign. For many of the ceremonial parades and reviews, the White Scars were marked only by the limited numbers in which they took part. The majority of those troops present, some five full Hordes numbering around 50,000 warriors, were engaged in scouring the wastes of Ullanor for the last defeated remnants of the foe. Those few Remembrancers who remarked upon them noted the restless aspect of the Legion and the distance between them and many of their brothers. Of all of the Legions at Ullanor, the White Scars kept mostly to themselves, with little of the camaraderie that marked the meeting of some of the other Legions.

Few preparations were needed to ready the Legion for combat. More than any other Legion, the White Scars were renowned for their strategic mobility, with most units remaining at combat stations throughout the Triumph. Indeed, several Brotherhoods were still engaged in active combat with xenos remnants on the outer worlds of the Ullanor system. Even as the Imperial Army units were marshalling, several of the White Scars Brotherhoods had already left the system to perform preliminary reconnaissance of the Chondax system. Within a few short days, the bulk of those Legion forces were ready to leave, with two Hordes and several squadrons of warships detailed by the Khan to secure

a staging ground while the bulk of the force assembled. Unusually, the Khan did not travel with the vanguard, choosing instead to remain at Ullanor as his battlegroup gathered. What few records we have available show this time was spent in closed meetings with the Warmaster, though what was discussed has been lost to time.

Despite the speed with which the White Scars assembled their Expeditionary force, they were not the first Imperial task force to arrive in the Chondax system. The Alpha

Legion had been present at Chondax for quite some time, having received their own orders from Horus long before Jaghatai Khan received his. Preparations had been made both within the system and without, the scale of which has not been fully examined until now. A number of void stations were constructed both along the heliopause of Chondax's star and in interstellar space. These stations, known to the Alpha Legion as the Tenebrae stations, were to act as sentinels over the Chondax system, hosting an array of complex signal interception systems that, when activated, would form a complex web around the Chondax system and stop all short range communications. The documents contained within the *Unbalanced Scales* also note the inclusion of small cabals of Word Bearers on several of the stations, apparently included for their ability to manipulate the Warp in some unknown manner, effectively blocking astropathic communication.

Their preparations were not limited to out-system stations, and several worlds within the Chondax system were prepared for the arrival of the White Scars. Chondax itself, a complex and sprawling system of three suns, had been first charted centuries before by explorers and traders, and had at one point played host to several isolated communities whose descent can be traced back to ancient exiles from the Skandik cantons of Old Earth. Long since devolved into ramshackle flesh-markets for the void-reavers that plagued surrounding systems, these settlements are assumed to have been destroyed by the influx of Ork tribes fleeing the destruction wrought at Ullanor, but the charts and names they used for the worlds of the system remained in common use. The Orkish hordes, now bereft of strong leadership, predictably split into a fragmented web of warring clans soon after establishing themselves in the strongholds of their victims. Unknown to Imperial agents, but thoroughly documented by Alpha Legion headhunter teams, the main Ork groups were concentrated around the rival fortresses of Hate Spike and Vorskarr in the inner system, the great fastness of Black-blight among the many worlds of the mid-system, and the nomadic clans borne on hollow asteroids that fought an unending, cannibalistic war amongst each other in the far regions of Chondax.

Careful to avoid agitating the Ork clans that had taken root in Chondax, the Alpha Legion created a network of small, shielded redoubts across the system. Most were tiny, intended to shelter only a few dozen Alpha Legion infiltrators, but at least two, located on the worlds of Byfrust and the moons of Phemus, were much larger. From these hidden fastnesses, each with an array of augurs and hardened communications systems, the Alpha Legion could manipulate the course of the fighting to serve their own ends. Little was left to chance. The White Scars would have scant opportunity to discover the subterfuge of their Warmaster and no sure path away from Chondax, save that which Horus and his allies allowed them. Horus had set his trap and now had but to await the arrival of his prey.

The Veil Closes
(5964 Standard Fractionals Before)

Chondax had been well chosen, both by the Orks that had fled there and later by Horus when he had searched for a distraction to occupy the Khan. Its battlefields were wide and pristine, untainted by the politics and logistical concerns that had begun to dog the last years of the Great Crusade and the White Scars. Here they were free to roam the empty plains and wide ash seas at will, killing and hunting as they chose with an enemy that asked no quarter and held almost as much delight in the simple act of combat as did the White Scars themselves. Such was the wild and uncharted nature of the system, with over a dozen major worlds, that the uncounted hordes that had fled the fall of Ullanor found no shortage of boltholes.

For a merely mortal task force it would have been the work of a lifetime to clear the entire system, and the cost in lives would have been far higher than warranted by an uninhabited and strategically unimportant system. Even for such a force that Jaghatai Khan had gathered, the campaign would be a major undertaking, for Horus' orders had been absolute: while even one Ork still drew breath in Chondax, their work was not complete. That such an effort seemed excessive for the reward of reclaiming a system like Chondax did not matter, for the Khagan had sworn an oath to one he considered not just his superior, but also his friend. The Khagan's own writings imply that he considered the affair a show of force by the newly crowned Warmaster, an attempt to cement his authority and success among his fellow Primarchs by making the victory he had achieved at Ullanor absolute. Such a style of leadership was not the same as that displayed by Jaghatai Khan, who was renowned for his remote, some considered negligent, approach to leadership. The Khagan had always preferred to inspire rather than demand blind obedience.

The Hydra at War

The size and organisation of the Alpha Legion contingent assigned to the Chondax system remains difficult to fully confirm. The information provided by the *Unbalanced Scales* and other Imperium sources does not tally with the account of the White Scars present at that engagement, though it should also be noted that several of those White Scars who recorded their recollection of events have contradicted each other. Such is the nature of the Alpha Legion, given as they were to deception and trickery, that it is likely that much of the confusion was an intentional battle tactic. As such, the author has chosen to include a full listing of those forces recorded as in-system by all sources. Those assets that can only be confirmed by one of the many sources, and must therefore be considered potential errors, have been noted as such.

Alpha Legion Fleet Assets: The Alpha Legion fleet, which managed to deploy combat flotilla against multiple Legions in disparate sections of the galaxy and still maintain numerical superiority, has been shown to be vastly larger than any pre-Heresy estimates and had two distinct components at Chondax. The first of these was made up of several squadrons of small, fast destroyers. These squadrons interdicted all traffic bound for the Chondax system, and are assumed to have accounted for the destruction of over a dozen merchant craft as well as four Imperial cargo-arks, and a single Thousand Sons cruiser that escaped sanction during the assault on Prospero and sought sanctuary with the White Scars. These ships are thought to number no more than 100 vessels, all kept supplied by the Tenebrae stations and active from some point in early 001.M31.

The second deployment was on a fleet scale, comprising at least 600 capital class craft and upwards of 1,000 smaller strike craft. This second fleet was intended as a last resort, and represents the first stage of the Alpha Legion's deviation from Horus' orders – for it was obviously formed with the intention of engaging and destroying the White Scars fleet in open void war. Assembled during the years which the White Scars spent on-campaign in Chondax, it is not believed to have been on-station until mid-006.M31, at which point it took up a position in the neighbouring Angvor system. It must be noted that many accounts taken from those involved in the later combat at Chondax make plain that many of the ships fielded by the Alpha Legion were not dedicated combat vessels, but rather converted bulk haulers and other non-combat craft cleverly disguised and provided with minimal armaments. Other ships in use by the Alpha Legion, later destroyed in combat and analysed, have been positively identified as craft originally belonging to other Legions and listed as missing long before the outbreak of the Horus Heresy.

Alpha Legion Assets: Compared to the vast naval deployment made in and around the Chondax system, the number of ground troops committed by the Alpha Legion is comparatively small. Based on combat reports from the few known surface encounters and the information contained in the *Unbalanced Scales*, the total number of Alpha Legionnaires present within the Chondax system is unlikely to have exceeded 30,000. For the most part, this strength was divided into far smaller strike groups, each tasked with monitoring part of the sprawling Chondax system, though two larger hidden outposts on the fourth moon of the cold gas giant Phemus and the world of Byfrust probably held larger reserve forces. In addition to these forces, there were also small garrison cadres aboard the Tenebrae stations, but these troops were not part of the larger battle within the Chondax system. However, records indicate that several of the Tenebrae stations are noted to have included a small number of Word Bearers among their garrison. These specialist troops appear to have been linked to the Alpha Legion's efforts to keep the system isolated from warp travel and communications.

Command and Control: Even with all of the resources now available to us in the wake of Horus' defeat, it is still unknown who commanded the Alpha Legion task force at Chondax. Some after-action reports by combat veterans of the incident have claimed that Alpharius himself was present, though these accounts are often contradictory, placing him in vastly different locations at the same time. Given the Alpha Legion Primarch's fondness for misdirection, and the diversionary nature of the encounter at Chondax, it is unlikely that the Primarch himself oversaw the combat. The only other insight available is the *Unbalanced Scales*, and that source of information must be considered to be of dubious provenance, which lists the commander at Chondax only by the pseudonym of '*Desidero*', likely some internal cypher with meaning among the hierarchy of the Alpha Legion.

Despite any misgivings over the orders of his Warmaster and friend, the Khan fell to the task of plotting his strategy with a will, perhaps glad to be once again at war and away from the endless parades of Ullanor and the posturings of his brother Primarchs. Chondax presented an unusual strategic challenge, for most Compliance campaigns were focused on the reduction and occupation of a single inhabited world, or the utter annihilation of several. As such the typical campaign consisted of a brief, if bloody, strike upon the enemy's concentrated forces, destroying his ability to resist before tasking trailing Imperial Army units with the long drawn-out task of hunting down stragglers and enforcing Imperial law on the shocked survivors. Chondax, with a binary pair of giant blue stars at its heart and a third star orbiting the central pair at an immense distance, offered sixteen major targets, each of which was infested with xenos stragglers to some degree. On all of these worlds, the White Scars would need to hunt down and obliterate their foe, harry the survivors to their deaths and then consolidate their hold on the world, for of all of the xenos foes Mankind had faced among the stars, it was the Ork that most often returned from the brink of defeat if not thoroughly purged. Once declared free of Orkish taint, each world would need a sentinel force left in place to stop the Orks fleeing from other targets from taking refuge there once again. The sheer size of the system was such that even with the large fleet contingent present, the White Scars could not easily interdict all of the dark places of Chondax, leaving them bound by honour and sworn oaths to a long drawn-out campaign of eradication.

The initial stages of the Chondax cleansing, as detailed in both the Khagan's records and the reports of the Imperium's logistics corps assigned to the fleet, were focused on seizing control of a single world in-system, which would act as the central command of the task force. From that central base, each individual target would be assigned to one or more Brotherhoods to clear and secure. This plan relied on the White Scars' skill at independent operations and decentralised command structure to conduct their mission with best speed without endangering its overall security. Those Imperial Army elements that had accompanied the fleet were to act as a specialised reserve, called in to deal with those targets that either required equipment the White Scars lacked, or that were better suited to more long-term static modes of warfare.

It was decided to use the fourth planet of the mid-system orbits, known on old charts as Kvarsir, a large open world of white salt plains, as the initial target of the fleet. Designated as Chondax Prime, and known more informally among the White Scars as the White World, this planet fitted a number of key parameters that would make it ideal as both an initial landing zone and later as a central command location. Of all of the desolate worlds of the Chondax system, it was perhaps the least inhospitable, a landscape of pristine white plains and low scrub vegetation, ideal for the kind of warfare preferred by the Vth Legion. It was also located within a reasonable real-space distance from most of the remaining targets of the sprawling Chondax system, considered important as the fleet's astropaths had noted increased aetheric turbulence in the area and had warned against unnecessary short range Warp translations. Lastly, and perhaps most confusingly to those unfamiliar with the nature of the Vth Legion, it was the site of the largest concentration of Ork forces yet found by those scout craft in-system, occupying several fortresses in both the wide plains and the remote northern mountains. Jaghatai Khan intended to descend from the heavens unlooked for and unexpected, shatter the foe's greatest strength before it could rally and then hunt down those left at his leisure.

Their plans thus set, the Vth Legion embarked for Chondax. At this point, the fleet consisted of those five Hordes present at Ullanor, perhaps 40,000 Legionaries, and the various regiments of the Imperial Army selected by the Khagan to accompany him. Departing from the great fleets that hung in orbit over Ullanor, the Khagan and his warriors went into what might have seemed to some more like a self-imposed exile but, as is recorded in various personal logs and oaths of moment made by the White Scars, was seen by the Vth Legion as a happy release from the onerous duty of parade and review. Following one of the lesser spin-ward channels of the great Paramar warp canal, the so-called Passage of Iron that passed through the Maelstrom and ended at the great forge of Anvillus, the Chondax Crusade fleet made the realspace translation into Chondax after only a few short months of travel. Here, the Khan instructed the fleet's Navigators to exit within the Mandeville belt, a narrow area of space between the orbits of the central binary pair, and the outer third star, where ships could exit warp space uninhibited. This risky manoeuvre placed the White Scars almost on top of their target, bypassing the packs of Ork reaver barges that warred with each other in the cold outer reaches of the system.

The combined firepower of the Vth Legion's ships and those of the Imperial Navy's capital craft quickly annihilated the few crude sentinel stations and scrap-barques the Orks had placed guarding Chondax Prime and allowed the fleet to secure orbit. The only casualty reported at this stage in the fighting was the Imperial Navy light cruiser *Forsworn*, which was struck by crude boarding craft and quickly infested by Ork raiders. Though relief forces from the nearby White Scars craft *Hawkstar* and *Void-mare* were quickly mustered, it is believed that Ork forces breached the engine compartment before they could reach the stricken cruiser, and the *Forsworn* was torn apart as the reactor detonated, raining burning debris down across half a continent on the planet below. With the sudden opportunism typical of his Legion, Jaghatai Khan quickly seized on this apparent failure and crafted from it a strange kind of victory. With the debris of the *Forsworn* tearing great fiery tracks through the atmosphere and throwing great clouds of pale dirt into the skies as they struck, the Khagan ordered planetary landings to begin at once. Risking his landing craft amid the falling debris, but shielding them from both Orkoid shell-fire and observation.

Their initial target was the largest of the Ork strongholds, a fortress known as Black-blight. It was one of several old fortresses on Chondax Prime that the Orks had seized in battle when they arrived there in retreat from Ullanor, a vast tower of rust and spite, with huge smoke stacks belching forth clouds of soot-dark smoke that stained the white plains of Chondax Prime black for kilometres around. Such orbital strikes were not a speciality of the Vth Legion. They much preferred more open styles of warfare than the brutal crucible of frontal assault and siege work, where their speed and ability as skirmishers could not be fully exploited. Faced with such a challenge, other Legions, such as the Blood Angels or World Eaters, might have unleashed the full might of their Legion in a hail of Drop Pods and descending jump troops, tactics whose ruthless effectiveness was only countered by the cost they extracted in casualties, a cost that a small Legion such as the Vth could ill afford to bear. Instead, the Khagan turned loose the Kharash.

Sometimes known as the Ebon Keshig among the Chogorian contingent of the Legion, the Kharash was one of the few units among the White Scars that routinely went to war clad in Terminator armour. Its ranks were not fixed, but instead made up of an ever-changing roster of volunteers seeking glory in battle or absolution from some perceived dishonour through service. Some outsiders have unfairly labelled the Kharash a suicide unit, but as with many of the White Scars' traditions, it confounds easy categorisation, being a position of honour and respect as much as it was one of punishment and contrition. The warriors of the Kharash, clad in black-stained Terminator plate fell upon Black-blight amid the rain of orbital debris, their Stormbird landing craft taking the brunt of the enemy's fire as larger and more ponderous craft found landing sites outside the fortifications. Within the tangled confines of the Orkish fortress, the Kharash fought a brutal hit and fade battle, striking at key defensive positions before withdrawing into the maze of corridors and bunkers behind the walls of Black-blight. Their heavy armour allowed them to endure where other units would have faltered, as little more than 1,000 White Scars brought chaos and death to the hundreds of thousands of Orks within the fortress.

As the Kharash fought, the remainder of Jaghatai Khan's five Hordes deployed upon the surface of the White World, eager to be upon the foe but ill-equipped for siege warfare. It fell to the stoic siege engineers of the Charonid Sentinels to breach the walls, the augmented warriors of Sol's cold outer reaches well outfitted for the task. With the Kharash occupying much of the Ork host's attention, the Charonid engineers encountered only scattered opposition as they laced the walls with high-yield melta charges and other more obscure weapons,

sheering away vast chunks of Black-blight's rusted defences and opening the heart of the fortress to its attackers. The Orks within, enraged by the baiting tactics employed by the warriors of the Ebon Keshig, poured forth to assault this new foe, only to find the massed ranks of the White Scars waiting for them. Now able to engage the foe on open ground, the White Scars fell upon their enemy with abandon. Squadrons of Scimitar jet bikes harried the Ork host, cutting off and isolating pockets to be destroyed by the more heavily armed infantry elements following in their wake, while Sabre strike tanks tore through the greenskins' ranks to target the few ramshackle armoured vehicles that emerged from the ruined fortress. At the head of the White Scars assault was the Khagan, Jaghatai Khan himself, a whirlwind of death and carnage in human form, inspiring his sons to feats of fearless daring and brutal valour.

The battle for Black-blight lasted a little more than six hours from its commencement. In the end, the remaining Orks fled into the vast wilderness of Chondax Prime, where an uncounted mass of their foul kin waited. This too was part of the Khagan's design, for he knew that when cornered, the Ork became a truly ferocious enemy, one his Legion was ill-equipped to deal with, but on the open plains there was no opponent to match the White Scars in battle. Black-blight was torn down so that no Ork might take refuge there again, and the White Scars placed their encampment by its ruins. This was no fortress as might have been wrought by the Imperial Fists, no bulwark to shelter behind and tie his forces down in defence, but a war camp from which to co-ordinate and resupply the various White Scars Hordes as they prosecuted an aggressive campaign out on the wide plains of the White World. Though it would remain standing for the entirety of the years that the White Scars would remain in the Chondax system, only the auxilia troops would stay in garrison, waiting to be called upon for their specialised skills.

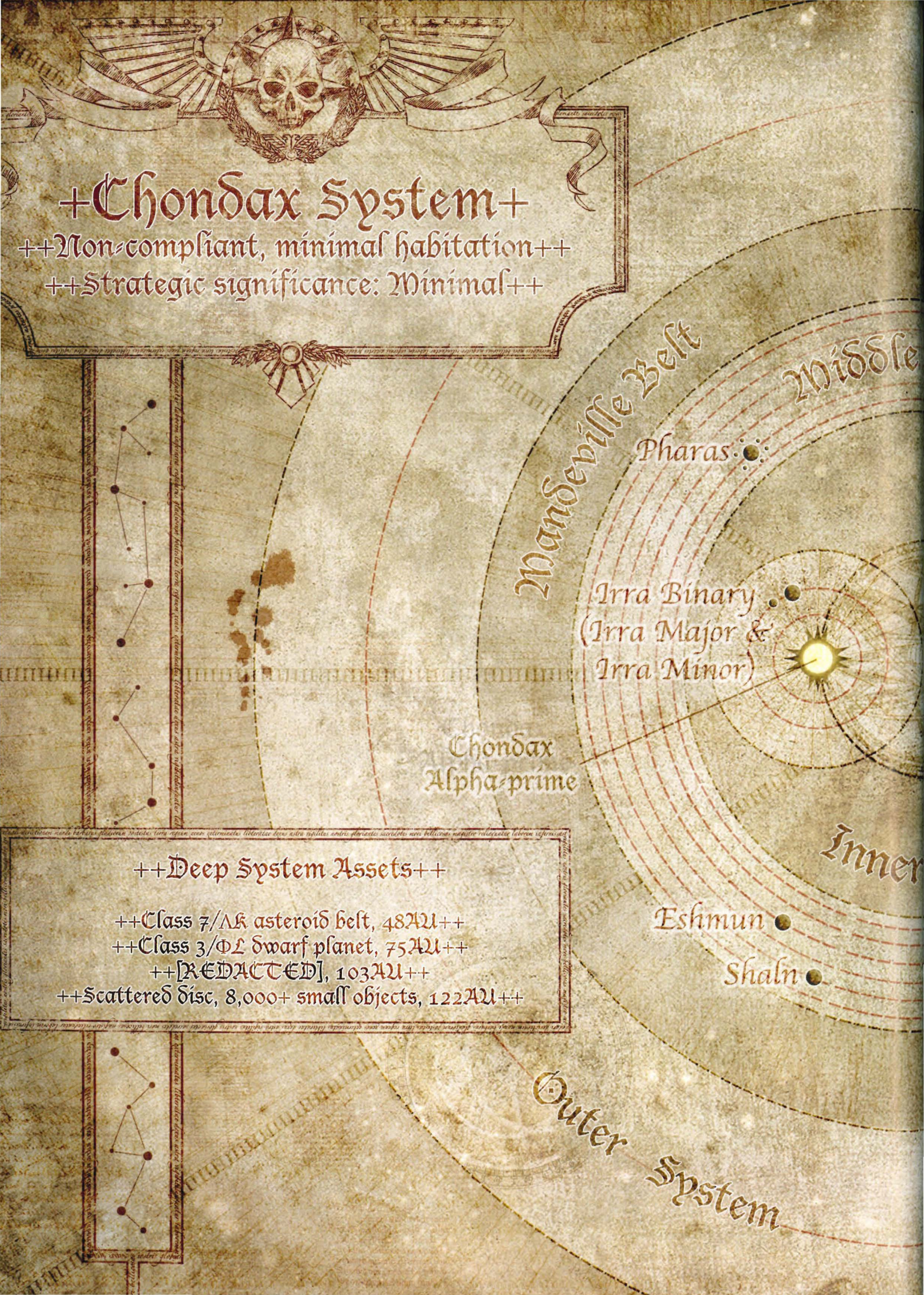
The Orks on Chondax Prime had spread out across the planet, still a teeming multitude beyond easy reckoning, wandering the wastes and warring amongst themselves as much as with the outriders of the White Scars. Any campaign to eradicate them would be a long endeavour, even for such ardent hunters as the White Scars.

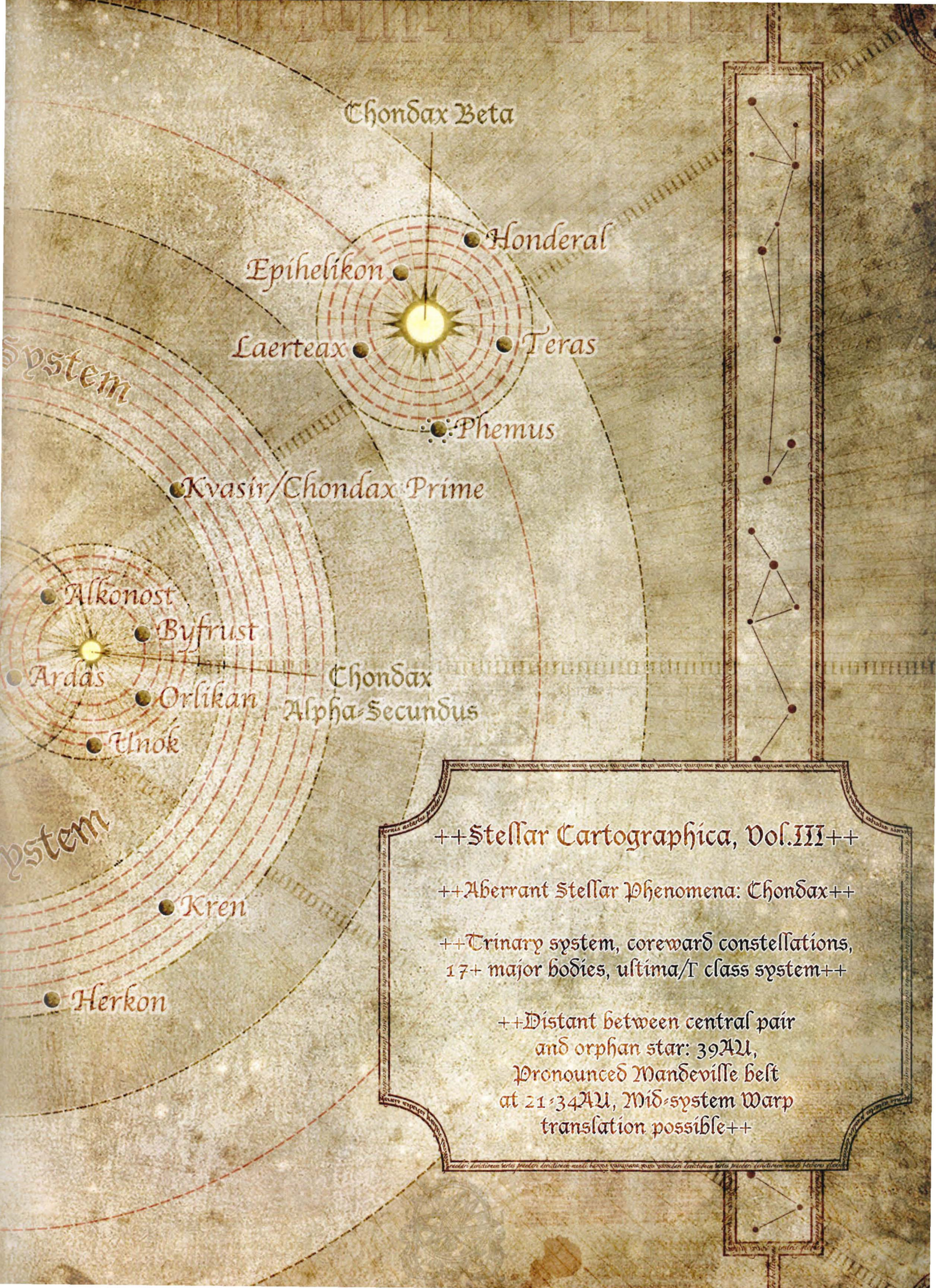
The Khagan set a full two Hordes to the chase, with orders to herd the greenskins to the north, where a series of low mountain ranges known as the Grinders gave them an opportunity to bleed and pen the foe before his annihilation. The remainder of his troops were dispersed across the system, each assigned a world to clear spreading outwards from their position on Chondax Prime, starting with the dwarf planet Kren and the shallow seas of Shaln. In each case, their orders were simple: hound the foe, bleed him and wear down his will to resist before a final annihilation once all of his foul breed was drawn into the open and penned for the slaughter. The Khagan lingered for but a short while on the White World before leaving to join the campaign elsewhere, ever eager for new hunting grounds and unwilling, perhaps, to be bound by the drudgery of strategic command. The White Scars seemed to need little oversight – once their destinations were assigned, each detachment vanished into the void. Imperial overseers and logistical aides at the war camp on Chondax Prime heard almost nothing from them until the report of final victory on a given world.

Perhaps it was that independent nature of the White Scars operations that saw the lack of communications from outside the Chondax system go almost unnoticed in the first few years of the campaign. After the arrival of two more Hordes, diverted from war zones in the far galactic south, the White Scars and their allies received no further communications of any kind from the wider Imperium. To any other Legion, such a situation would have caused far more concern, but the Vth Legion was long used to operating far from the oversight of the Great Crusade and its distant masters. They paid little heed to the absence of demands for status reports and logistical manifests, and instead concentrated on the task before them. Some reasoned that it was the work of transitory warp storms or other phenomena that caused their astropaths to fall silent, for such events were far from unknown on the fringes of Imperium space, while others blamed the remote nature of the Chondax system, far as it was from the main thrust of the Great Crusade. Many among the Auxilia command were less sanguine in the face of such a breach of standard protocol, Stratigos Gygan made a number of official complaints regarding the matter to Jaghatai Khan himself, but the Khagan paid them little heed. He embroiled himself fully in the fighting, giving in to the release that such bloody abandon brought, an attitude that prevailed among much of the Vth Legion.

This was far from the only misery to bedevil the campaign, for as the years wore on, other odd inconsistencies began to present themselves. The Ork forces, long since fallen into the old internal strife common to the Orkoid breed, and divided into crude clan groupings after the fall of Black-blight on Chondax Prime, displayed an odd sense of strategic awareness. Wherever the divided Brotherhoods of the White Scars stood on the threshold of crushing one faction, they would continually find another threatening their flanks, forcing them to delay the final strike. Even on an interplanetary scale, the Orks seemed able to respond to shifts in the White Scars deployments long before they should have been aware of them, with warbands making sudden crossings between planets that saw White Scars Brotherhoods stymied and forced back onto the defensive. At one point, two of the Imperial Navy's macro-ark carriers were destroyed during transport operations for a battalion of the Seraphine Guard – 3,000 men-at-arms lost when a pack of crude Ork gunships somehow stumbled upon the craft during refuelling and overwhelmed the cruiser *Broken Ladder*.

Other losses plagued the campaign, as did many victories, but always there was some unknown factor at play that skewed what should have been decisive victories into pyrrhic successes. The Brotherhood of the Red Hawk, having spent the best part of a Terran-standard year harrying the Ork clans on Honderal and separating them before seeking to crush each isolated clan host, found their efforts were in vain when a series of unexpected earthquakes and subsidences forced several clans to join together with other nearby warbands. In the deserts of Eshmun, the Brotherhoods of the Coiled Serpent and the Star-shield were engaged in a running battle to drive an Orkish armoured host into a defile where the Charonid engineers had planted enough phosphex charges to annihilate the foe, only for a far smaller warband of Orks to stumble into the trap before the main force could be lured into range. Worse yet, across the system an odd sickness had taken a hold on many of the Orkish warlords and seers; many succumbing to a Warp-bred madness that the White Scars were ill-equipped to deal with. Fortunately, the Sisters of Silence accompanying the fleet were able to suppress many of these psychic outbreaks, but they were spread thin, and several White Scars forces took heavy casualties dealing with such outbreaks. At the time, most commanders placed the blame upon the crushing defeat inflicted on the Orkish race at Ullanor, but perhaps this was not the sole cause, for the Warp raged uncommonly fiercely around the stars of Chondax.


+Chondax System+
++Non-compliant, minimal habitation++
++Strategic significance: Minimal++
Mandeville Belt
Middle
Pharas
Irra Binary
(Irra Major &
Irra Minor)
Chondax
Alpha-prime
++Deep System Assets++
++Class 7/ΛK asteroid belt, 48AU++
++Class 3/ΦL dwarf planet, 75AU++
++[REDACTED], 103AU++
++Scattered disc, 8,000+ small objects, 122AU++
Inner
Eshmun
Shaln
Outer System


Chondax Beta
Honderal
Epihelikon
Laerteax
Teras
Phemus
Kvasir/Chondax Prime
Alkonost
Byfrust
Ardas
Chondax
Alpha-Secundus
Orlikan
Unok
Kren
Herkon
++Stellar Cartographica, Vol.III++
++Aberrant Stellar Phenomena: Chondax++
++Trinary system, coreward constellations,
17+ major bodies, ultima/I class system++
++Distant between central pair
and orphan star: 39AU,
Pronounced Mandeville belt
at 21-34AU, Mid-system Warp
translation possible++

Yet, for each such delay there stood a triumph, a glorious hunt such as those the White Scars had undertaken in the early years of the Great Crusade. On Teras, three Brotherhoods of Krenak Noyan-khan's Horde fought a running battle over four days as they pursued an Orkish host mounted on ramshackle oil-belching bikes across endless storm-wracked plains of ice. On Alkonost, Asudai Noyan-khan, with Knight-Centura Merovin at his back, fought a bloated Hain Warp-seer in the depths of the vast caverns that the Orks had infested on that world. Herkon saw the largest armoured clash in the history of the White Scars as squadrons of Sabre strike tanks, Predator battle tanks and Sicaran tanks fought alongside the Dracosans of the Saturnyne Rams against a roiling mass of scrap-behemoths. All the while the Khagan was everywhere, with word of him in battle from the Irra Binary to the moons of Phemus, tales of his prowess spurring the White Scars on despite the hardships they endured.

Despite the victories that each year brought, the inconsistencies encountered during the campaign were slowly beginning to accumulate, and a master of strategy such as Jaghatai Khan could not help but see them. As the fighting in Chondax began to draw to its inevitable conclusion, the various logs kept by the White Scars show a growing sense of unease in the Khagan and his command echelon. Seven years had passed since their arrival, seven years of fighting that had seen the Chondax system almost completely rid of the taint of the Ork. Yet still there was no word from the Imperium and no word from Horus either in support of their efforts or in condemnation of the length of their campaign. No ships from beyond Chondax had arrived, and the White Scars and their allies had depleted much of their stockpiles of munitions and other crucial supplies. Those few craft that had been sent outwards, to clear the interference of the warp storms that billowed around the edges of the Chondax system, had not returned. Where once the hunt had kept such worries from the Khagan and his sons, the Orks no longer presented enough sport to eclipse his concern. Those few logs we have from this time suggest that Jaghatai Khan knew something of import was occurring out in the Imperium. By means of some latent talent or subtle premonition, he knew that it was time for the White Scars to leave Chondax and seek answers. He had done as honour demanded and satisfied his word to Horus, his friend and Warmaster. Now, he was owed answers.

Shadows and Spite
(137 Standard Fractionals Before)

For seven years, the White Scars had lost themselves in a war carefully arranged and orchestrated for the sole purpose of keeping them trapped at Chondax. The true cause of the White Scars' delay lay with the actions of the Alpha Legion. The XXth Legion had not sat idle while their erstwhile brothers fought their way across the many worlds of the Chondax system. From their hidden redoubts, they enacted a campaign of stealth with a goal to nullify any and all strategic gains made by the White Scars. Where the Orks were brought to bay, the Alpha Legion staged raids to move them free of White Scars traps. Where the Orks massed for suicidal assaults on warriors of the Vth Legion, the Alpha Legion assassinated key xenos warlords to deny the White Scars a decisive battle. Under the guise of natural events and disasters, Alpharius' sons reshaped worlds to better suit the plan they had laid for the conflict. Little by little, the White Scars were drawn out across a dozen worlds, spread out and worn down by continual warfare and, where necessary, allowed small victories to lure them on.

There were few ploys considered too extreme for the Alpha Legion infiltrators tasked with the distraction and covert dispersal of the White Scars combat units. However, the orders Alpharius had received from Horus made it plain that they were to take all measures necessary to avoid any confrontation with the Vth Legion. Horus demanded that no White Scars Legionary was to be harmed unless absolutely necessary. Yet, by comparing the records of the White Scars from the Chondax campaign and the information provided by the *Unbalanced Scales*, it would appear that even this directive was violated on a number of occasions. Most obviously, those ships dispatched by the White Scars to breach the curtain of warp storms that surrounded the system all appear to have been taken and destroyed by the Alpha Legion. What became of their crews is still unknown, though it is likely that those few that survived the Alpha Legion boarding actions were tortured for information and executed. Add to this toll a number of White Scars patrols missing in action, most likely eliminated as the result of Alpha Legion headhunters operations. Most such incidents are likely the result of action taken to avoid detection, but others seem more indiscriminate and malign, the casual cruelty of a predator playing with its prey before the final blow.

Of these various incidents, there are two worthy of further note, not merely for their impact upon the White Scars and the Chondax campaign as a whole, but also exemplars of the depths to which the Alpha Legion was willing to descend in the furtherance of their mission. The first of these incidents occurs in the early years of the campaign, during the fighting on Shaln. Here, amid the shallow, mildly acidic seas that dominated the world, Nogai Noyan-khan led a highly successful campaign of eradication. More than any of his brother Khans, Nogai had mastered the art of stalking the Hain tribes, making full use of his hunting packs of reconnaissance Legionaries and Burkhut's Claws veterans to isolate and trap weaker portions of the Ork horde on Shaln. Such was the speed of his personal campaign that he received commendations from the Khagan himself, and spurred the other Hordes to ever greater feats with each of his own triumphs. As such, he posed a dire threat to the mission of delay given to the Alpha Legion, for should the White Scars gain too much momentum early in their drive to annihilate the Orks, it would become all but impossible to slow them by covert means. So, rather than employ more subtle methods, the Alpha Legion turned to more direct means.

At the height of the fighting on Shaln, at the battle of the great western reef where the gathered might of Nogai's Horde used a combination of hit and run strikes by jetbike-mounted Brotherhoods and adept traps and ambushes set by the Falcon's Claws, Nogai fell. His body was discovered after the battle, a posthumous victory added to his long record, and at the time his death was assumed to have come in battle with the Orks. It was in fact the work of an Alpha Legion headhunter cadre under the command of a warrior using the title *Interfector*, attacking from ambush and leaving the White Scars warrior little chance to defend himself.

White Scars Contemptor Dreadnought

Tegusai of the Uhaan Solban

Rarely are the Dreadnoughts of the White Scars seen outside of the fortresses of Chogoris and Terra, and only for those key battles destined to shape the Legion. It was perhaps a sign of what was to come that more Dreadnoughts were present at Chondax than any other campaign of that time, a precursor of the Time of Waking that would follow in the Age of Darkness. Tegusai is shown here shortly before the revelation of the Alpha Legion's betrayal at Chondax; he would be lost on Honderal while he fought to defend the wounded as they were loaded aboard waiting Storm Eagles.

As far as can be easily verified, this may be the first instance of one of the Legiones Astartes purposefully making war on another of his kind, occurring as it did in 002.M31. This grim honour may well have been part of the Alpha Legion's purpose on Shaln, to test this new foe in preparation for some future endeavour as much as to curtail the White Scars' progress in their mission. Some among the veterans of the Falcon's Claws raised concerns over the nature of his ambush, considering it too clean and well-prepared for any Ork, and noted the lack of Orkish dead around the fallen Khan. But with no reason to suspect foul play, such concerns were ignored and the Horde withdrew from combat to perform the appropriate rituals due the death of an honoured Khan and war leader, allowing the Orks to regroup on Shaln.

Even more significant than the death of Nogai Noyan-khan was the Phemus Massacre. Though at the time many overlooked the incident, it is considered by most scholars who have studied the Chondax conflict as the turning point, the action that saw the long campaign of hidden knives come to an end.

Phemus was a cold gas giant on the very edge of the system, in orbit around the yellow tertiary star. The gas giant itself was of no strategic interest, but of its near 30 moons there were seven of sufficient size and atmospheric density to support Orkoid populations, and more significantly, but unknown to the White Scars, it was one of the largest Alpha Legion strongholds in the system. The cleansing of the moons of Phemus had been assigned to the Brotherhood of the Talon by the Khagan, some six months prior to the incident. Much of the fighting had been concentrated on the second and eighth moons, but the fourth, a small volcanic orb, was also capable of supporting a population and showed faint signs of an unknown presence.

As one of the final actions of the campaign, with much of the rest of the system declared free of the xenos taint, elements of the Brotherhood of the Talon were assigned to sweep the fourth moon. Unknown to the White Scars, Phemus IV played host to the second of the Alpha Legion's large strongholds in the greater Chondax system, a carefully constructed and heavily shielded compound buried beneath the ash and rock of that inhospitable moon. Here sheltered a full chapter of the inscrutable Alpha Legion, intended to act as a strategic reserve in case of dire need, as well as a means to relieve the various infiltrator cadres at work throughout Chondax.

As several cadres of the Brotherhood of the Talon drew close to the hidden base, the Alpha Legion was forced into action. The White Scars, busy hunting the small bands of Orks present on Phemus IV, were unprepared for the carefully prepared ambushes that the Alpha Legion laid for them and quickly became prey themselves. A short and viciously one-sided battle erupted under the ash-laden skies of Phemus IV, one of the first to pit brother against brother in open fighting. Taken by surprise and not expecting to face an enemy akin to themselves, the White Scars quickly fell prey to the sharp knives of the Alpha Legion's experienced headhunters, though some few of the Brotherhood of the Talon managed to reach high ground and mount a brief, if ultimately doomed, defence. In the aftermath of their victory, the Alpha Legion triggered a series of landslides and lava spills to cover the traces of the battle, leaving the White Scars entombed in the ash after removing their own dead.

This was hardly the first time that the Alpha Legion had eliminated intruders, yet at this point in the long campaign the continued delays and strange occurrences had left many among the White Scars command echelons wary. For the first time a full investigation was undertaken, a Khan set to the task of discovering the fate of the Brotherhood of the Talon with surety. With the Brotherhood of the Storm now on Phemus IV seeking answers and the Ork infestation of the greater Chondax system all but destroyed, there must have seemed to the Alpha Legion's commanders little left for them to accomplish by secrecy. Despite this, there is some uncertainty as to whether what followed was a deliberate choice on behalf of a unified Alpha Legion, or a situation forced upon them by the actions of a rogue faction within the Legion. But for whatever reason, the veil of silence that had fallen over Chondax suddenly lifted.

The Hydra's Coils

Horus had laid his plans for Chondax and the White Scars well. He knew how best to manipulate Jaghatai Khan and his sons, and how to win them to his side. With the perfect execution of his plans for the Isstvan system, for Prospero and a dozen other early conflicts, the failure of his schemes at Chondax stands out as a notable blunder. Yet, it is not one that can be laid fully at the feet of Horus, for the prime failure in this plan was the Warmaster's trust in the Alpha Legion. For reasons ultimately known only to Alpharius himself, the Alpha Legion chose to disregard several key factors of the plan. They allowed the two Legions to come to blows on a number of occasions, though attempts were made to conceal these actions; they allowed communications to be restored too early, warning the Khagan of the treachery abroad in the Imperium; and they forced an armed confrontation with the White Scars.

Of all of these failures, it is the last which is the most telling, the one thing Horus had sought to avoid, for he knew any attempt to force the Khagan and the White Scars to do as he bid would end in disaster. Yet the Alpha Legion ignored these wishes. To assume that the Alpha Legion erred from simple foolishness is laughable, especially after the careful skill with which they prosecuted the early stages of the campaign. No, this is no mere act of ill-disciplined foolishness such as might have been expected of Angron's berserkers, but a purposeful and malevolent act of betrayal. For some reason, a faction within the Alpha Legion wanted Horus' plan to fail, but not fully, not enough to end the war – just enough to prolong it and deny either side a quick victory.

The Veil Lifts
(8 Standard Fractionals before)

All across the Chondax system, astropaths attached to the White Scars fleet were hit by a cacophony of voices from beyond after years of silence. The effect was catastrophic, the sudden blizzard of meme-coded information overloading the desensitised psyches of those astropaths that remained at duty stations aboard the fleet. For a perilous few days, the White Scars were unable to properly transliterate the meaning of those messages they received, having only the ominous tone of the imagery involved to guide their growing unease. The first few missives to be fully deciphered did little to assuage the concerns of the Khagan and his close advisers, for though contradictory in the extreme they all spoke of civil strife in the Imperium, of Legions turned against their brothers. In the face of such an unthinkable possibility, and with no verified intelligence on the situation, the

Khagan took the fateful decision to delay any response. That such an uncharacteristic course of action was chosen, for the White Scars had ever been at their finest while they held the initiative, spoke of the deep disquiet that beset Jaghatai Khan at this time. He had been isolated for years, kept apart while events had moved far beyond his grasp. He could not know what was truth or exaggerated fiction, who was ally and who was enemy. Worse yet, his own log entries suggest that he was not sure where his own loyalties lay.

The only action taken by the gathered White Scars commanders as the Khagan wrestled with indecision, was to order a re-call of all combat assets in the greater Chondax system, summoning the Hordes back to Chondax Prime with all speed. Yet, in all of the confusion caused by the shocking news of war between brothers in the Imperium and the system wide overload of vox-networks and astropathic relays by the sheer volume of new signals, few noted that a number of outposts and detachments failed to acknowledge the recall order. Such lax discipline in strategic communications was far from unusual among the independently-minded White Scars, but here was the first signal of the Alpha Legion's dire intent. Across the system, as Jaghatai Khan wrestled with his misgivings, the White Scars came under attack.

The first such assaults came at the very edges of the Chondax system, where detached squadrons of the massive Alpha Legion fleet waiting at Angvor fell upon isolated White Scars patrols. Based on the number of craft that failed to respond to Jaghatai Khan's recall order and were later listed as missing, it can be estimated that perhaps as many as 30 capital-class craft were lost in such actions. Emblematic of these largely forgotten engagements is the ambush of the patrol group under the command of Naran Tenri-khan, lord of the cruiser *Eagle's Claws*. Consisting of four light cruisers: the *Eagle's Claws*, *Serengrel*, *Hawkstar* and the *Narsukh*, and accompanied by a small destroyer group, this was typical of the small patrols the White Scars maintained in the latter days of the cleansing campaign. Having detected unusual signals within the innermost sectors of the system, where the orbit of the stars Chondax Alpha-Prime and Chondax Alpha-Secundus clouded auspex scans, the ships had moved to investigate, expecting to find nothing more than a few crude Orkish gunships. Instead, they discovered a single White Scars cruiser along the edge of the system's outer asteroid field. The White Scars craft was inert and quickly identified as the *Dark Moon*, a vessel thought lost during the early years of the campaign.

The White Scars craft, with no reason to suspect foul play, moved in to render aid to their apparently stricken brothers and as they closed, the *Dark Moon*, now revealed as little more than a broken hulk, detonated. The explosion, most likely the ship's reactor set to overload, tore through the patrol group, leaving the *Narsukh* crippled and the *Eagle's Claws* with hull ruptures and fires on multiple decks. At the same moment, a trio of Alpha Legion heavy cruisers emerged from cover in the debris field trailing Chondax Alpha-Secundus and opened fire on the stricken ships. Intending to distract the Alpha Legion craft from their beleaguered comrades, the *Hawkstar* and *Serengrel* sprang forward with a sudden burst of acceleration to engage the heavy cruisers at close range, the destroyers following in their wake. A high speed pass by the light cruisers did little to dissuade the heavy gunships and left the *Serengrel* trailing debris, its armour peeled back along one flank and the bilious flare of rad-leaks visible on auspex scans. The destroyers at their heels fared little better, the torpedo strikes they managed to land savaged the front shielding of the lead cruiser, slowing its advance, but only served to see them immolated by the concentrated heavy guns of the other Alpha Legion ships.

Ignoring the two light cruisers as they powered past, the Alpha Legion ships converged on the two damaged craft, slamming a series of broadsides into the burning *Eagle's Claws*, which could reply only feebly with its few operable batteries, and launching a blizzard of boarding craft towards the hulk of the *Narsukh*. With few remaining options, the two operational White Scars cruisers came about for a second pass, concentrating on the wounded Alpha Legion craft. Passing its prey at a speed difficult for the lumbering Alpha Legion gunships to match, the *Hawkstar's* accurate gunnery managed little more than to batter the thick hull plating of the Alpha Legion ship, and in return bore the brunt of the return fire. Limping away with ragged holes across its hull and bleeding vapour, the *Hawkstar* could do little more than watch as the *Serengrel*, following its vector past the Alpha Legion ships, veered at the last moment and slammed prow first into the weakened armour of their target, locking

Historia Terra Regnum

Tenebrae 9-50

The Tenebrae stations of the Alpha Legion are yet another facet of that secretive Legion's mystery. Constructed in secret during the last years of the Great Crusade, those few that have been discovered have shown hints of unknown technology and research projects delving into mysteries long since deemed too dangerous for unsanctioned exploration. Tenebrae 9-50 was one of several stations whose focus, at least in part, seems to have been the Chondax system, and provides another tantalising hint at the strife occurring within the Alpha Legion itself.

At roughly the same point in time as the sudden ending of the communications blackout that had bedevilled the White Scars since the beginning of the fighting within the Chondax system, Tenebrae 9-50 was utterly destroyed. It is difficult to believe that these two incidents are unconnected. More likely the Tenebrae 9-50 installation acted as a linchpin for the network of stations around Chondax that fuelled the aberrant warp storms that surrounded it and barred all communications from reaching the White Scars within. If so, then it is the destruction of Tenebrae 9-50 that delivers news of the Horus Heresy to Jaghatai Khan, and not some decision of the Alpha Legion.

This action, though ultimately beneficial to the Loyalist war effort, was not undertaken by any known Legion asset. Tenebrae station 9-50, located near the remote Octiss system a short stellar distance from Chondax, is known to us only through Alpha Legion records and the *Unbalanced Scales*, and even its ruins remain undiscovered by any Imperium force. Considering this, it seems most likely that the station was destroyed by a renegade faction within the Alpha Legion, either for reasons of its own or to covertly further the Loyalist cause. Of course, we must also consider that all of the evidence pointing towards the existence of Tenebrae 9-50, a station never recovered by Imperial forces, may be just another lie fabricated by the Alpha Legion to confuse and obscure their role in Mankind's civil war.

The Price of Victory

Seven years of war had taken its toll upon the cleansing fleet. According to those records available, the White Scars had been bled little by little across the dozens of worlds in the Chondax system, no doubt all part of the Alpha Legion's plans. By the beginning of 007.M31, they had lost perhaps 9% of their number, approximately 6,000 Legionaries, as outright casualties and another 15% were in need of medicae attention severe enough to limit their combat potential. In total, nearly 16,500 Legionaries of the White Scars were combat non-effective when the Alpha Legion chose to strike, though as they had been limited to specific, low-intensity actions, the various auxilia regiments had suffered comparatively light casualties.

Worse yet, as a result of both the sprawling nature of the system and the manipulations of the Alpha Legion, the White Scars were spread all across the greater Chondax system in detachments that were rarely larger than a few Brotherhoods. Only on the central worlds of Chondax Prime: Kren and Shaln, were they present in considerable numbers, with the majority of four Hordes between the forces present on those worlds. The auxilia regiments were also scattered about the system – on many of the minor worlds it was companies of the Seraphine Guard that stood sentinel after the White Scars had pronounced them clean of xenos taint. All of the combat assets available to Jaghatai Khan were also showing the first signs of exhausting the limited munitions and other supplies brought with them to Chondax, for over the long years of the cleansing no new supplies had arrived. With combat entering its final phase and the main strength of the enemy broken, worries over supplies had been deemed non-critical.

Fleet elements of the White Scars were similarly scattered, with the main strength of the armada present at anchor over Chondax Prime. Elsewhere, small squadrons of capital-class ships, mainly the light cruisers favoured by the Vth Legion for their speed, patrolled the isolated worldlets of Chondax and the vast asteroid field that sat at its periphery. Fortunately, the White Scars fleet assets had suffered little damage during the Great Crusade, the few encounters with Ork void craft having been conducted years before and ending decisively in favour of the Vth Legion, and were also more plentifully supplied with munitions.

both ships together in a tangle of wreckage. Though the *Serengrel's* sacrifice had crippled one of the attackers, the remaining Alpha Legion ships made short work of the *Eagle's Claws* hulk while the *Narsukh* remained silent and dead. The *Hawkstar* was forced to disengage at what speed it could still manage, hoping to lose its pursuers with a desperate dive through the outer corona of the Chondax Alpha-Secundus star, where the Alpha Legion ships presumed it to have been destroyed by the intense radiation and heat.

On the outlying planets, where the sheer size of the Chondax system left a lag of several hours in conventional vox transmissions, several of the White Scars ground detachments also came under attack. In each case, the assaults were carefully planned and cruelly executed, giving the defenders little chance to organise a defence. In almost every case, the units attacked were either annihilated within the space of a few hours or so beleaguered that they were unable to signal their distress or extract themselves from the combat zone. The Alpha Legion were careful to openly target only those units that were isolated from support and a suitable distance from the main force on Chondax Prime, limiting their prey's options to either a quiet forgotten death or to the desperate and futile heroics that were the antithesis of White Scars doctrine.

On the outlying world of Herkon, long since proclaimed clean of xenos taint, the two Centuries of Seraphine Guard left as custodians were approached by a detachment of Legionaries in the heraldry of the White Scars, who turned their guns on the unprepared auxilia troops once inside their fortifications. This ploy of false colours was used again on Honderal and the various moons of Pharas, capitalising on the difficulty many auxilia units had in interpreting the often inscrutable heraldic devices used by the White Scars. In the steaming jungles of Epihelikon, the more disciplined soldiery of the Saturnyne Rams were less easily fooled, but failed to open fire when confronted with Legionaries in false colours, even after a challenge by sentries failed to receive the correct code responses, resulting in the regiment suffering heavy casualties and being forced to abandon its camp for the dubious safety of the deep forest. Still unaware of the outbreak of Horus' civil war, it was unthinkable to the warriors of the Chondax fleet that some of the Legiones Astartes might be considered enemies.

Even among the White Scars themselves such base ploys proved effective. On Irra Minor, the ice-bound companion of Irra Majoris, the Brotherhood of the Black Axe was openly approached by an Alpha Legion headhunters force, allowing what they perceived as brother Space Marines into their camp, where the Alpha Legion cohort promptly opened fire. Only by the heroic efforts of Sengur Khan who, along with a few of his veterans, mounted a suicidal counter-attack into the teeth of the enemy's fire, were any of the brothers of the Black Axe able to escape into the ice-wastes of Irra Minor, carrying the maimed body of their Khan.

Many other small garrisons, usually isolated outposts of no larger than Brotherhood size, simply vanished. The Alpha Legion had long laid their plans, knew with exacting detail the deployments of each of the White Scars detachments, had long since cracked their vox encryption and maintained every advantage of surprise. It was a testament to the skill and stubborn bravery of the White Scars that these initial attacks did not see the Legion destroyed piecemeal.

Indeed, a number of White Scars elements managed to fend off their attackers, although critically none were able to transmit more than garbled static to warn the Khagan of the treachery afoot. On Phemus IV, where a reconnaissance cadre had been left to scout for other causes for the loss of the Brotherhood of the Talon, the White Scars exhibited more caution than their brethren on other worlds. When the Alpha Legion contingent on the planet revealed their presence, deploying a macro-beacon from their previously hidden base, they were not taken unaware. An attempt by the Alpha Legion to lure them into ambush with distress signals sent under Vth Legion code was quickly turned against the XXth Legion, with the warriors of the Falcon's Claws proving easily the equal of the Alpha Legion in a slow-paced battle of stealth and silent murder. The White Scars, fully aware of the danger presented by their foe, maintained the initiative by using their jetbikes to quickly redeploy across the lava-scarred landscape, eventually falling back as the Alpha Legion reinforced their position around the beacon.

Byfrust, one of the final targets of the cleansing campaign, was still host to a sizable force of White Scars, perhaps eight Brotherhoods and attached militia forces that included detachments of the Charonid Sentinels and Silent Sisterhood. A glacial world where the Orks had dug vast fortified dens in the deep canyons away from the cutting winds that swept the world's surface clean, Byfrust had proved a welcome challenge for the White Scars. Their mounted Brotherhoods had been more than adept at clearing the glacial plains of Orks, but less effective at fighting in the crude tunnels beneath. They had instead relied on the formidable skills of the Charonite engineers to force the Orks to the surface, blasting shafts down with melta-charges before filling the warrens below with phosphex, after which they could be easily harried across the ice.

Having only recently ceased combat operations after the final battle, the gathered Brotherhoods, under the overall lead of Tsolmon Khan, maintained deep-range

patrols of the icy wastes, vigilant for any Hain remnants. Instead, by pure luck, the patrols stumbled across the marshalling forces of a full battalion of Alpha Legion warriors and the second of the hidden bases within the Chondax system. Unwilling to allow the advantage of surprise to be lost, the Alpha Legion loosed its own mounted squadrons in pursuit, seeking to silence any warning before they fell upon the main host of the White Scars on Byfrust. However, they could not match the warriors of the Vth Legion for speed or the peerless control they had over their mechanical mounts, and they were quickly outdistanced. Tsolmon Khan, forewarned of the host approaching, had ample time to abandon his makeshift base and escape the Alpha Legion, but in doing so he would surrender any chance of warning the Khagan of the Alpha Legion's treachery. Neither he nor his warriors would abandon their duty, and despite the approach of the far larger Alpha Legion force, they held their ground and attempted to transmit a message through the maelstrom of new signals now flooding the system.

Only on Chondax Prime were there no attacks. Here the Alpha Legion pursued a different strategy. Instead of blades and bolt shells they deployed a far more deadly weapon: lies and misinformation. For years, the White Scars had fought unaware of the great upheavals occurring in the Imperium, of the Council of Nikaea, the death of Prospero and the Dropsite Massacre. Word of these events was more devastating to the morale of the Vth Legion than any mere martial victory the Alpha Legion might have won. The Khans of the White Scars on Chondax Prime reeled at the news of civil war, of brother killing brother in the far reaches of the Imperium, of the blood-red end of the Great Crusade and all they had fought for over nearly two centuries. Some have questioned how, in these initial stages of the Chondax incident, the White Scars could have ignored all the various danger signs. The answer is simple. In the wave of shock, anger and despair that followed the news that reached them in the last few days before the Alpha Legion closed their trap, they found that all of the things that had once formed the foundation of their universe had come loose. Loyalty and duty had been cast aside, and in the wake of such a betrayal, lesser concerns fell to the wayside.

The earliest messages to reach the White Scars command staff and the troubled Khagan were the long prepared and rehearsed half-truths of Horus. They spun a cruelly warped tale of a renegade Leman Russ bringing death to Prospero and igniting civil war, a lie so devastating for its credibility. Russ' hatred of the Sorcerer king and his world was well-known, as was his proclivity to red-handed brutality. Backing this tale was a summons from Horus himself, calling on his loyal friend Jaghatai Khan to come with all speed to his aid in putting down the rabid wolf and his traitor sons. Had this message arrived unopposed, it is likely that the White Scars would have joined Horus that day, that the Khagan would have gone to war seeking vengeance for his brother Magnus and damned the Imperium without realising his duplicity. Yet, despite all of the well-set schemes of the Warmaster, this was not the only missive to reach the White Scars Legion. Word also came from Rogal Dorn, seneschal of Terra under the Emperor's personal seal. He sent word of Horus' own betrayal at Isstvan and summoned the White Scars to Terra with all haste.

Faced with the betrayal either of a friend or of his own Father, Jaghatai Khan now held in his hand the fate of the Imperium. Should he rally to Horus, his ally and steadfast friend, then the balance of power would quickly favour the cause of the Traitors and would likely have seen Terra besieged within a year; but should he depart for Dorn and Terra, heeding the authority of the distant Emperor then the Loyalists would reclaim the advantage and Horus would see his ambitions shattered. It is impossible for us, here in the broken aftermath of the Horus Heresy, to know what impossible struggles raged within the mind of Jaghatai Khan in that fateful hour. Many of the Primarchs were brought face to face with fate in the early days of Mankind's civil war – Magnus at Prospero, Ferrus Manus at Isstvan V and Guilliman at Calth. Yet all of these had faced a threat they were trained to fight, a foe they could rage against. Jaghatai Khan had no such luxury. He was left to decide the fate of an empire on rumour and hear-say, on the half-understood dreams of astropaths.

What decision he might have made we can never know, for as the Khagan wrestled with his doubts, the Alpha Legion played the final card of their hand, making one last attempt to wrest destiny onto the course they wished for it to take. With chaos erupting across the worlds of the Chondax system, and doubt spreading through their commanders, Jaghatai Khan was finally given an enemy to face.

Bow to No One
(The Chondax Engagement)

So unexpected was the Alpha Legion's arrival, that at first it went unnoticed. By the time word was passed to the Khagan, there were already 50 Alpha Legion ships in-system. Within minutes, that number had doubled, and then tripled. More and more ships appeared, translating from the Warp with an accuracy that usually required a guide beacon, and within the space of an hour, there were over 1,000 ships bearing the mark of the Hydra floating in the narrow channel of space between Chondax's central binary pair and its outer companion star. They ran the full spectrum of warships, from the slender lines of keen-prowed destroyers to bloated heavy cruisers bristling with gun batteries. In number they far outmatched the White Scars ships – even with most of the fleet in Chondax gathered over Chondax Prime by the Khagan's recall order, they had no more than 700 vessels, and of those most were smaller, leaner craft than the Alpha Legion's warships.

The two fleets stared at each other across billions of kilometres of space, but no words were exchanged. Those ships of the White Scars that had answered the Khagan's summons took up battle formations mirroring their cousins of the Alpha Legion and still there was no communication, neither to condemn nor to coerce. So it continued for some hours, as ever more missives forced a path through the aether to the receptive minds of the Khagan's astropaths. Yet each new message only confused the issue further, some speaking in support of Terra and Dorn, and others for Horus. Each move made by the White Scars, each attempt to prompt a response from the silent Alpha Legion cordon, was mirrored by Alpharius' Legion. With the Khagan still unaware of the Alpha Legion's role in the Chondax campaign and of the conflict unfolding even as he pondered his Legion's future aboard the *Swordstorm*, neither side seemed eager to provoke a violent confrontation.

Then the storm broke with the suddenness that was the hallmark of the White Scars' campaigns. Jaghatai Khan's void fleet surged forward behind the *Swordstorm*, all-thrust at the Alpha Legion's cordon. The Khagan had not been idle while he pondered his brother Alpharius' fleet, even confronted with such a dire situation he had seen a single point of weakness in its deployment, one chance to break through the confusion

that now held his own Legion immobile and helpless. The Alpha Legion fleet attempted to shift its formation to counter the attack, massing squadrons of heavy cruisers towards what appeared a disorganised assault by the White Scars. This was the beginning of what the wild Legionaries of Chogoris called a Standard Zao, a tactic adapted from the horse-tribes that roamed that world's vast plains and one unfamiliar to the Alpha Legion. It was to prove as deadly in the void as it had on Chogoris.

The *Swordstorm* remained at the forefront of the advance, a vast warship bristling with guns, but sharp-prowed and as fast as any light cruiser, but the first craft to contact the Alpha Legion were the outlying destroyer squadrons and corvette picket lines. As they came into range of their opposites, light screening squadrons of blue-sheened voidcraft marked by the Hydra, they opened fire without warning or formal challenge. Macro cannon salvos and searing lance beams tore through the void, but the Alpha Legion were far from vulnerable. The coruscating discharge of void shields marked the first open exchange of fire between the Legions who had been sworn brothers so short a time before. Despite their defence screens, the sheer weight of fire had left several Alpha Legion picket ships as burnt out hulks, rolling silently in the void, but the remainder returned fire with equal vigour. White Scars cruisers moving up in the wake of the destroyers opened fire as soon as their gunnery officers could calculate firing solutions, but by now the Alpha Legion was more than ready and their heavier, albeit slower, ships replied in kind.

The forward squadrons of both fleets clashed, but neither side had claimed the advantage in combat, both equally matched in skill and ferocity. Both had suffered hurt, with few ships free of damage and several trailing streams of debris or infested with boarding craft, but as yet no ships of the line had fallen. Yet, despite their initial fervour, the White Scars' assault had quickly slowed, with the headlong rush quickly turning into a desultory skirmish. As the Alpha Legion began to move up their reserve squadrons, the White Scars fell into a hesitant retreat and their lines began to fold back on themselves. Worse yet, with the Alpha Legion fleet massed of significantly more craft than Jaghatai's, the veteran captains of the Alpha Legion moved to envelope the Khagan's apparently foolhardy assault. The battle in orbit hung in the balance, but the Zao had yet to fully begin.

Mandeville Points

The origins of the warp drive, that most essential marvel of Mankind's lost technology, have long since been lost. Much of the terminology and phenomena surrounding its operation is unknown even to the most learned of the tech-magi of Mars – we understand the practical uses of such arcana as *Gellar fields* and *Hohne translation apertures*, but not the origins or meaning of their peculiar titles. This is also true of the so-called *Mandeville point* of a given star system.

In the most brief and incomplete terms, a Mandeville point is an area of a given star system that is far enough from any large gravitational fields, thus allowing the stable formation of a warp drive's entry or exit point. Attempting translation to or from the Warp outside of the points increases the stresses generated within the warp engine to dangerous levels, and will likely result in the destruction of the vessel, or worse, stranding it within the Warp permanently.

For most systems, the Mandeville point is simply a certain distance from its star and any other large planetary body. With most non-critical transports, this forces chartist captains to translate into realspace at the edge of the system and move to their destination under more conventional power. Some systems, such as Chondax, feature a complex orbital structure that allows a deviation from this standard. The presence of the inner binary and distant companion star allows for a narrow Mandeville belt between their two orbits, and skilled Navigators can use such a belt to translate into the middle of the system rather than at its furthest edge. It is such a manoeuvre that the Alpha Legion conducted upon arriving in Chondax, using a positional beacon on Phemus IV to align their ships and cutting off the Khagan's fleet from the system's edge and their outlying garrisons.

Elsewhere in the greater Chondax system, the White Scars faced more desperate battles, a campaign that was a match for any other in sheer viciousness, if not in scope. A hundred small wars all fought in the space of those few days that the Khagan fought his war in the void. Chondax Prime was now all but abandoned in the wake of the evacuation, the warriors who had fought to cleanse it now battling for their lives in the void, while those detachments on distant worlds were by necessity left to secure their own means of evacuation. With no further need for secrecy, the Alpha Legion cadres hidden across the system moved to oppose their escape. Daring assaults and decapitation strikes replaced sabotage and stealth, with many smaller outposts annihilated in the opening hours of the battle, and most hard pressed to hold a defence while they struggled to join the retreat from Chondax.

On Herkon, eight Brotherhoods, nearly 10,000 warriors, marshalled to embark upon their transports as an Alpha Legion strike force of Spartan assault tanks and other armoured units bore down on their encampment. The Brotherhood of the Red Moon, with a final salute to their brothers, took to the plains on their jetbikes and heavy speeders to hold off the foe as best as they could and die in service to the Khagan. Desolate Kren had only a few small frigates still in orbit to act as transports for more than 12,000 warriors, among which were included both Legiones Astartes and militia alike. They drew lots, not to see who would be saved, but rather for the honour of staying behind to bring the fight to the enemy. In the jungles of Epihelikon, where no White Scars vessels of any kind remained, the Alpha Legion mustered with grim confidence, expected a cowed and beaten foe to await them, only for Argus Gygan and the Saturnyne Rams alongside the Brotherhood of the Pale Serpent to break through their lines in a near-suicidal assault. The Imperial troops took control of a number of drop craft while fending off Alpha Legion counter-attacks in a desperate attempt to rejoin the fleet. Such tales of grim bravery were numerous, though we must assume that many more heroes died unremembered in the chaotic fighting.

Phemus IV, where the White Scars had first become aware of the Alpha Legion's treachery, was host to one such tale. Here the small force left to continue the investigation, now stranded with the departure of those cruisers in orbit, was locked in a deadly war of shadows and sudden fury. The Alpha Legion garrison, its hidden base now revealed and reputed to be the lair of none other than the Primarch Alpharius himself, pitted its headhunters and infiltrators against the swift riders and laughing killers of the White Scars Brotherhood of the Sable Wolf.

Ulkanor Khan, rightly suspecting the macro-beacon the Alpha Legion guarded was critical to their plans, led his bodyguard Keshig in a bold assault. Yet despite their speed and skill-at-arms, the White Scars quickly fell victim to the murderous traps of the Alpha Legion elite. Caught at bay among the lava pools and ash drifts, his Scimitar jetbike crippled and Keshig scattered, Ulkanor Khan called out his opposite, challenging the Alpha Legion commander to single combat as his warriors looked on from the shadows. Without a word Siridor Vhen, the Alpha Legion Praetor, signalled his men to open fire, cutting down the brave Khan.

On distant Byfrust, where the White Scars under the command of Tsolmon Khan could not know that their Khagan was blasting a path directly away from them, the fighting was even more grim. Tsolmon Khan's attempts to warn the Khagan of the Alpha Legion's treachery had failed, drowned out by the signals that had flooded the system, and the oncoming force of Alpharius' sons bore enough heavy firepower to quickly reduce his meagre fortifications to ruin. In the face of overwhelming odds, Tsolmon is recorded as making the following statement to the assembled White Scars and Imperial soldiery, which has since passed into legend, "*Brothers, we know not from where our betrayal has come, from the Warmaster or our Emperor, and it matters not. We fight for our honour and the Khagan, not at the demand of some distant tyrant. We fight because we were born to do so, not for the ambitions of emperors. We are White Scars, we are the storm on the horizon and we bow to no one.*"

And the White Scars charged, laughing as they went into battle.

The Chisel

So sudden was the shift across the system, that few among the Alpha Legion had time to set their defences. In high orbit of Chondax Prime, where only moments before it had seemed that the White Scars fleet was on the cusp of a rout, its formation suddenly coalesced into an armoured wedge of void craft, the *Swordstorm* at its point. The final phase of the Zao had begun, precisely as the Khagan had intended. The *Swordstorm* struck the thinnest part of the Alpha Legion cordon, weakened when they had released their reserves to pursue the feigned retreat of the White Scars, brushing aside the lesser craft that sought to bar its passage. Lance beams flickered in the void and short lived gouts of flame and wreckage marked the path of the White Scars flagship, a pale dagger thrust into the belly of the Alpha Legion fleet.

In similar fashion, the warriors under the command of Tsolmon Khan on Byfrust formed a flying wedge of jetbikes, assault land speeders and light armour aimed at the heart of the Alpha Legion formation. Little expecting this subtle ferocity, the Alpha Legion were initially taken by surprise, though with warriors of the Legiones Astartes such surprise would only be momentary. Yet, this was all the opening the White Scars required. A detachment of the Golden Keshig opened a hole in the ranks of the Alpha Legion, their lances shattering ceramite and spearing through even Terminator plate. Behind them came almost every warrior Tsolmon could muster, White Scars and Imperial soldiery alike staking everything on one desperate charge. The target of the assault was the Alpha Legion commander at the centre of the attack, Malek Striga and his acolytes, in order to cut the heads from the hydra. The heavier elements of the White Scars attack slowed to engage the main body of the enemy, granting the fleeter Scimitar and Erinyes jetbikes of the White Scars and Sister of Silence the opportunity to push deeper into their formation, seeking its corrupted heart.

Amid the clash of blades and thunder of heavy guns, the outnumbered phalanx of White Scars used their speed to best advantage, cutting a path through the Alpha Legion as the azure-clad warriors tried to re-order their lines. Hurtling down upon the Alpha Legion's command cadre, the jetbike-mounted warriors were met by a wall of dark, roiling warp-flame, the work of the sorcerous powers of the Alpha Legion Consul Striga and yet another sign of the Alpha Legion's descent into treachery and abomination. The White Scars faltered as Striga and his acolytes unleashed hell upon them, gouts of rancid flame and shrieking beams of impossible energy tearing holes in their phalanx and stalling the assault in its tracks. Through the hel-storm, however, came the surviving warrior maidens of the Silent Sisterhood, warp-flame recoiling from them as though alive and terrified of their presence. Immune to the dark arts of the Alpha Legion sorcerer, the Silent Sisters threw themselves at the renegade Legionaries, the acolytes falling to their blades as their psychic kine-glaives failed them.

Knight-Centura Merovin, wounded and exhausted from battle, faced Malek Striga in single combat. Though a superlative warrior in her own right, the Silent Sister could not match the sheer post-human might of the Legiones Astartes consul and was cast down, mortally wounded by the Alpha Legion warrior's force lance. As Striga prepared to deliver the final blow, Tsolmon Khan appeared through the failing psychic miasma that surrounded the pair, weakened as it was by the Knight-Centura's genetic curse, and struck him dead with his thunder hammer. With their leader slain and the White Scars rampaging through their lines, the Alpha Legion warriors sensed they had lost the initiative and began a carefully co-ordinated disengagement. Fading into the twisting glacial tunnels and redoubts so recently held by the Orks, the Alpha Legion surrendered the field, no longer willing to indulge the White Scars in open battle.

At that point, as if in answer to the desperate alarm broadcast at Tsolmon's order, a lone cruiser slid into high orbit of Byfrust. Yet this was no sleek White Scars vessel, but the blunt, efficient form of an Alpha Legion bombardment cruiser, later identified as

the *Phi-Hekator*. The Alpha Legion ship moved into geosynchronous orbit above the battlefield, its weapons batteries primed and locked onto the site of the White Scars' short-lived victory. Below, only now made aware that the Khagan and his fleet were far across the system, leaving Tsolmon and his troops with no hope of rescue or reinforcement, the last few hundred White Scars gathered, seeking out their wounded on the field that they might meet death defiantly on their feet. Tsolmon Khan himself, his fleeting success now rendered meaningless, tossed aside the corpse of Malek Striga and gathered up the fallen form of the Knight-Centura before joining his men that they might meet their fate together.

The Hydra's Head

The involvement of Alpharius during the Chondax Engagement is a matter of much speculation, but little direct evidence. Considering the size of the fleet involved, many have assumed his presence at its head, though no records speak to the truth of this. Various unconfirmed reports from around the system claim his presence during the combats that broke out across Chondax, individual warriors tell of seeing him in the thick of the fighting on Epihelikon, Irra Minor, Kren and further afield. The only such sighting with any weight of evidence behind it is that noted during the fighting on Phemus IV, where multiple warriors of repute mention the presence of a warrior that matches the description of the XXth Legion's master in his most well-known panoply. However, considering Alpharius' penchant for deception and the number of other documented incidents where body doubles, clones and more esoteric forms of disguise have been employed, as well as the fact that many of these sightings place the Primarch at locations far distant at the same time, we must assume that most, if not all of them, are false. As such, this chronicle has chosen not to record the majority of them in the name of clarity, retaining only the Phemus IV encounter.

With the death of Ulkanor Khan, the situation on Phemus IV seemed equally dire, with few officers left to take command of the Brotherhood of the Sable Wolf. Indeed, the highest ranking warrior that remained was Munokhoi, known in the Vth Legion's broken gothic as the Black Hound, Kharakhor, a Moritat killer and unused to authority or grand strategy. Unlike his Khan, he had little use for honour and set out into the wastes of Phemus IV with only one objective: to kill as many of the enemy as he could before death overtook him. His braying laughter echoed among the ash dunes alongside the harsh report of his pistols as he killed, drawing the Alpha Legion to each new slaughter left in his wake, and with each victory more of his brethren joined his wild hunt. The Alpha Legion replied to such reckless fury with cold cruelty, dispatching the vigilator assassin known as the *Interfector* to eliminate the last of the White Scars.

The fighting raged sporadically across Phemus IV's harsh terrain, hit and run assault followed by ambush followed by decapitation strike in endless and varied repetition. Without the numbers to mount a direct assault upon the Alpha Legion's fortified base, Munokhoi and those White Scars reavers that followed in his wake satisfied themselves with wreaking carnage upon those patrols that ventured out. In return, the Alpha Legion enacted a series of complex entrapments, possibly to test their tactics in open combat against other Legionaries as much as they were intended to end the fighting. Due to the irregular nature of this engagement, it is difficult to fully reconstruct events. The White Scars relied heavily on their familiarity with independent operations and filed only a few after-action reports regarding their deeds. Of those we possess, most deal with records of the fallen and of worthy foes, often ignoring the tactical situation and details of unit dispositions. It is interesting to note that despite the severity of their situation, many conceal a grudging admiration for the canny nature of their foe, even those like the *Interfector*, whose skills at ambush and long range marksmanship laid low many of the White Scars. Some few reports even make mention of encounters with a towering figure in heavily ornamented armour wielding a spear, a figure some have assumed was Alpharius himself.

With the White Scars unable and the Alpha Legion unwilling to bring a quick end to the fighting on Phemus IV, the shadow war continued. Perhaps it would have done so interminably until the Alpha Legion decided that it had served its purpose and used their sheer numerical advantage to wipe the moon clean of their foes. What might have occurred will never be known, for as the fighting on the ground turned in the Alpha Legion's favour, the orbital battle did not. The Khagan's spearhead had shattered the lines of the Alpha Legion fleet, the *Swordstorm* brushing aside those cruisers that sought to bar its path in a storm of lance fire and short range torpedo salvos. Before the Alpha Legion could re-order their lines, the *Swordstorm* and other lead squadrons were battering a path through the weakest point of their formation, the remainder of the fleet following at flank speed.

Ships bearing the mark of the Hydra tumbled and burned in the void, hit by successive barrages from each wave of ships that passed, but cruisers marked by the Khagan's lightning bolt insignia suffered in return in their heedless charge. Worse, those of the White Scars ships that fell behind due to damage or being cut-off from the main formation by the manoeuvring of the Alpha Legion craft, were quickly overwhelmed, blasted apart or infested with boarding craft and captured.

Despite those losses suffered, the Zao, or '*Chisel*' in the sonorous Chogorian tongue, plunged onwards, cutting through the outer layers of the Alpha Legion's complex formation and into its heart, where common Imperial doctrine placed the heaviest and most powerful void craft. Ranged against the *Swordstorm* and its brethren were dozens of Alpha Legion gunships and battle-barges, each apparently heavy with grand batteries and hangar bays, outnumbering and out-massing the White Scars' spearhead substantially. We must assume that the Khagan counted on the speed and ferocity of his assault to carry the fight, for he did not intend a drawn-out fight, but merely to break through the formation before him, though it may be that the wild-blooded Primarch of the White Scars simply did not care what odds awaited him. With the Khagan in the lead, not one of the ships that followed balked at the doom that waited for them in the guns of the battleships ahead. Indeed, many of the cruisers in the second and third waves of the Chisel formation channelled power away from key defensive systems in order to accelerate and join the attack.

Whether by keen insight, or the blessing of fortune, Jaghatai Khan's attack had struck at the hidden flaw in the Alpha Legion's strategy. The *Swordstorm* and its companion ships let fly every shell, torpedo and las charge at their disposal, turning the deep void bright as day with their firepower, expecting little more than to scar the shielding of such mighty vessels with their first salvo. Instead, the barrage sowed chaos

among their foes, leaving a number of the largest craft as little more than burning hulks. While some of the enemy craft were indeed the pride of the Alpha Legion's fleet, perhaps a full third were little more than bulk freighters modified to appear as heavy cruisers and battle barges, poorly shielded and weakly armed. With the overwhelming power of the Alpha Legion fleet revealed as little more than a clever fiction, there was little to hold back the Khagan's fury. The Zao drove through the centre of the Alpha Legion fleet, the smaller craft to the rear following in the wake of the destruction wrought by those in the lead. The Khagan did not halt to give battle, even with the odds balanced between the two fleets, and instead made best speed for the far side of the system where his ships could safely make the translation to warp space.

The White Scars pushed their finely tuned sub-light drives to their limits, powering through the void on a course that would take them past Phemus and the outlying worlds before leaving the confines of Chondax's triple suns' gravity. The Alpha Legion ships had scant chance of matching such speed, and indeed showed little inclination to continue the fight, instead consolidating around the inner system with only a few small frigate squadrons shadowing the White Scars' retreat. Their orders seemed to preclude close pursuit of the Khagan, but must also have forced them to remain in Chondax, perhaps to spur Jaghatai onwards and keep him from lingering. As such, the Khagan and his fleet came at last to the battle-scarred moons of Phemus, fresh from battle but with their thirst for vengeance far from sated.

An Eagle, a Serpent and a Wolf

Upon arriving at Phemus, that bloated sentinel sat at the furthest extent of the greater Chondax system, Jaghatai Khan discovered what had become of those detachments of his sons that had been unable to respond to the recall orders. Phemus boasted 30 moons, seven of which had played host to battles during the campaign against the Hain, and of which only two of the small Brotherhoods left to watch over them had reported back as part of the recall. Of those that had remained behind, either having never received the call or were prevented from leaving by the Alpha Legion, little now remained. Only on the fourth moon where the Black Hound and the remnants of the Brotherhood of the Sable Wolf continued to fight, were there signs of survivors.

Here, with no vast fleet of enemies to restrain him and aroused to anger by the ruin wrought upon his sons, the full wrath of the Khagan fell upon the Alpha Legion. Massed squadrons of Storm Eagle gunships and other landing craft descended on the surface, bearing the Khagan's personal Keshig guard and those other elements of the Legion that could be swiftly marshalled for combat. A tide of white armour and sleek jetbikes surged across the ash wastes of Phemus IV towards the base that had previously been concealed from them, the warriors of each Brotherhood competing to keep pace with the Khagan at the forefront of the assault. The Alpha Legion sent forth a phalanx of armoured behemoths, a trio of mighty Fellblade tanks kept hidden in the depths of their base for just such a moment, to stall the Khagan's approach backed by rapier artillery and infantry cadres. The onrushing jetbike squadrons quickly enveloped the lumbering Fellblades and their support, a whirling caracole of white around a small knot of blue.

The expert riders of the Vth Legion evaded devastating cannon blasts and ploughed through hails of boltgun fire with equal aplomb, delivering pinpoint blasts from multi-meltas or swinging in close to plant melta bombs. To the rear, the survivors of the Brotherhood of the Sable Wolf, now well-acquainted with the twisting canyons of Phemus IV, fell upon the artillery train, causing much havoc as they repaid the debt of blood owed them. In short order, the Khagan's troops had surrounded, neutralised and bypassed the Alpha Legion force, pushing on to the base itself. Here the Khagan sought to find his brother, Alpharius, whom reports claimed was present on the surface, that he might answer for his actions. Yet for all his efforts, Jaghatai Khan found nothing of his brother save for ghosts and rumours. Reports spoke of Alpharius first repulsing White Scars assault troops at the lower gates, then stalking the main battlefield in the company of Alpha Legion headhunters. Drawn from skirmish to skirmish, the Khagan encountered only decoys, mistaken sightings and outright traps as the Alpha Legion artfully kept him from the main thrust of the assault.

With Jaghatai Khan and his elite distracted, the remaining Alpha Legion warriors fought a well-planned delaying action, holding intersections and fortified positions within the base as long as possible before falling back. The White Scars replied with an assault the sheer speed of which threatened to overwhelm the defence, often outflanking the Alpha Legion positions before they could displace. When overrun, the Alpha Legion fought with calculated determination, selling their lives dearly to buy as much time as possible in the face of the White Scars' unbound ferocity. What time they bought was paid for in blood for, though distracted, the Khagan could not be ignored, and where he walked, the Alpha Legion's defences crumbled and commanders fell and the righteous fury of the White Scars reaped a heavy toll of Alpha Legion lives. This short respite, purchased by deception, holding action and sacrifice, allowed the Alpha Legion to jury rig the endo-thermic generators buried deep beneath the once-hidden fortress, setting off a chain reaction of massive explosions that began to tear the base asunder.

The fighting reached its heights as the White Scars, now trapped amidst the doom that the Alpha Legion had wrought for themselves, turned to fight free of the violent end overtaking the fortress. Bitter gunfights erupted in the crumbling inner precincts as the White Scars fought to extricate themselves from their own success, with the Alpha Legion struggling to pin them within even as their fastness collapsed around them. Here, amid the churning fortifications, Jaghatai Khan came face to face with the Alpha Legion commander, not Alpharius, but merely Praetor Siridor Vhen. Denied the confrontation with his brother that he had searched for, Jaghatai Khan gave vent to his frustration and anger, attacking Praetor Vhen. Though a mighty warrior, lacking in neither skill nor experience, the Praetor was no match for the Primarch of the Vth Legion. Even exhausted by battle and betrayal, Jaghatai Khan could have dispatched his foe in the first pass of their blades, but the Khagan chose not to, instead toying with the Alpha Legion warrior much as that azure-clad Legion had toyed with his own men. Such cruel sport gave the Khagan little satisfaction, and the master of the Vth quickly tired of it, striking a mortal blow to his opponent. There, as the fortress shuddered through its death throes and Jaghatai Khan stood over him, Siridor Vhen spoke, "*Shall I tell you of the terror we have saved you from, little Khan? You may snarl and thrash at our hands upon your leash now, but in the end you will thank us. There are fates far worse than that you race towards. Perhaps I shall tell you of the fate of Magnus, for it will please me to see you weep.*"

The Bloody Toll of Victory

Of the approximately 60,000 White Scars still combat effective during the Chondax Engagement, only a small fraction were not gathered as part of the great recall order issued by the Khagan. Of the conflicts noted here, most of which occurred in isolated garrisons and amongst units at some distance from the main host, there were perhaps less than 10,000 White Scars involved.

Despite the vague nature of the Vth Legion's logistical records, we can estimate their total casualties in combat with the Alpha Legion to be approximately 6,000 Legionaries. Of these, perhaps 2,000 perished during the void battle, either assigned to one of the craft destroyed or damaged or as crew aboard one of the strike craft squadrons engaged in the ship-to-ship actions that took place. The remaining warriors lost were all assigned to the smaller garrisons in the Chondax system that were destroyed by the Alpha Legion.

Of these last 4,000, only half of that number can be verified as killed in combat – many of their bodies were never recovered, and while it is assumed that they met their end in battle, it may be that some were taken alive by the Alpha Legion. What purpose the XXth Legion might have in taking prisoners is perhaps best left unexplored beyond the most obvious – information. The presence in the last years of the Horus Heresy of units whose operational and combat performance seems reminiscent of White Scars doctrines is most probably coincidental rather than some grim experiment with chimeric gene-seed.

The White Scars fleet sustained similarly light casualties, with a total of 30 void craft noted as absent from the last translation out-system. These include a number of craft known to have been lost before the recall order, most likely ambushed by Alpha Legion hunter-killer squadrons, as well as those craft destroyed during the execution of the so-called Chisel manoeuvre. Again, as the Khagan chose to abandon the system and make all speed to Prospero, the hulks of these ships were left to the Alpha Legion, and several of them are later noted as being seen in action. Indeed, on several occasions, the Alpha Legion are known to have employed these repaired and restored hulks as part of their Trojan horse operations in their original White Scars panoply, luring Imperium squadrons into ambush with false signals.

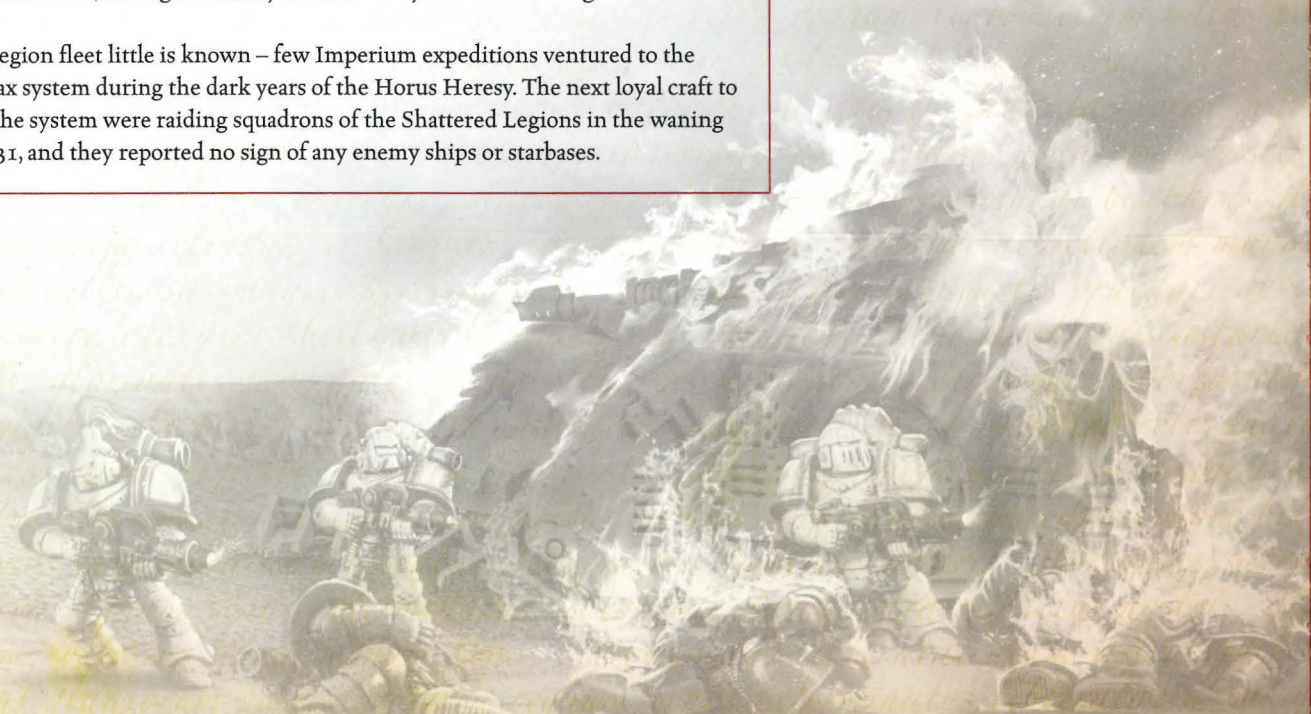
It is worth noting that the forces gathered at Chondax were not the full strength of the Vth Legion. A further five Hordes, approximately 30,000-40,000 Legionaries, are known to have been assigned to other duties. Some remained as the garrison of Chogoris, while others were assigned to crusades and conflicts along the furthest rim of Mankind's new domain. At least one of these Hordes is known to have declared for Horus, perhaps not knowing of Jaghatai's refusal to do so, having been fed yet more lies by Horus and his agents.

Of the Alpha Legion fleet little is known – few Imperium expeditions ventured to the remote Chondax system during the dark years of the Horus Heresy. The next loyal craft to take refuge in the system were raiding squadrons of the Shattered Legions in the waning years of 010.M31, and they reported no sign of any enemy ships or starbases.

Siridor Vhen would not speak again, for before he could utter another word he was silenced by the impact of a high velocity shell fired by an unknown marksman. Robbed of both a victory and any sense of certainty by the actions of the Alpha Legion, Jaghatai Khan was left with only unanswered questions and doubt. He had rescued those of his sons stranded on Phemus IV and extricated the Vth Legion from the Alpha Legion trap at Chondax, but he still had few facts regarding the circumstances that had set such a dire plot into motion.

Whatever satisfaction there was to be found in the visceral distraction of combat was stolen by the looming dilemma of his Legion's future. Who among his brothers did he owe loyalty to? And which of them still held any loyalty to him? What dire fate had befallen the Lord of Prospero, one of very few brothers he held as a true friend among his distant and inscrutable kin?

As he stood on the ashen surface of Phemus IV, it must have seemed that all of the Imperium had turned against the White Scars, that all of the things in which the Khagan had once placed his trust and to which he had given his loyalty had come tumbling down, just as the Alpha Legion fortress had done. A fortress of lies whose supports had been torn out from under it.



For those of the White Scars far from the side of the Khagan, any such notion of ambiguity had long since been removed from their situation. Theirs was a simple one, outnumbered and surrounded on all sides by the Alpha Legion and with little remaining hope of escape, they counted those who fought by their side as allies and all others as enemy. Such was the lesson they had been taught by the wiles of Alpharius' sons – give no trust to uniforms and symbols, only to action. On Byfrust, the farthest planet in the system from Phemus, these lessons had been wrought of death and written in the blood of the fallen and few remained to witness their end. Less than 300 warriors remained in Tsolmon Khan's command out of thousands – Legiones Astartes, Silent Sisters and sentinels of the Charonid fanes all bound together by the betrayal perpetrated upon them. All waited in silence for their end as the Alpha Legion cruiser *Phi-hekator* slowly turned in orbit to bring its vast macro-lance batteries to bear upon them. Yet fate had decreed a different end, and when the sky lit up, it was not with the searing light of descending lance fire, but instead with the death throes of the *Phi-hekator* itself, struck without warning by another vessel which had emerged from Chondax Alpha-Secundus' corona.

This new arrival was barely recognisable, its hull plating melted and deformed by the extreme heat it had endured and still bearing the marks of an earlier battle, but those few scraps of heraldry that remained marked it as the *Hawkstar*. Presumed lost in an earlier battle on the far side of the smaller companion star of the Chondax system, the *Hawkstar* had circumnavigated the star Alpha-Secundus under cover of its outer corona, finally emerging near Byfrust. Its first salvo had crippled the *Phi-hekator* and triggered cascade failure across the *Hawkstar's* systems as its heat-load spiked, and while its second salvo obliterated the Alpha Legion ship before it could recover or return fire, it also burned out a number of the *Hawkstar's* secondary systems. The battered White Scars cruiser settled into orbit of Byfrust, still radiating the excess heat accumulated during its voyage and the execution of the *Phi-hekator*, as it dispatched landing craft to recover the survivors below.

On the surface, Tsolmon Khan and his warriors delayed their escape to perform one last duty. Upon the icy plains of Byfrust they raised a cairn of stone and fallen ship spars, a rough and hasty monument to those who had fallen valiantly in battle as brothers. Within they interred all of the Loyalist bodies they could find, from the lowliest battle-brother of the Vth Legion or initiate of the Charonid auxilia to that of the Knight-Centura Merovin. In death all were made equal, and those who yet lived were humbled by the courage that they had shown on the field of battle. On that crude tomb, raised on the bleak and lonely surface of a world unknown to the wise and the mighty, they inscribed no lengthy tributes nor gilded laurels, but only a few short words of praise in the flowing Korchin script of Chogoris, translated here to Low Gothic from Old Chogorian:

Under blue heaven,
empires rise and then they fall.
Heroes cannot die.

With the last of those warriors who had endured through the battle brought safely aboard, the *Hawkstar* rained fire down on the Alpha Legion fortress below, leaving nothing but ruins behind it when it left. Broken but

The Hound and the Huntsman

The death of Siridor Vhen was not a lone incident – over the course of the final battle that took place on Phemus IV, a total of six officers were slain by an unidentified sniper. Of these, two were Alpha Legion warriors, both fallen but not killed in battle with the White Scars, while the other four were White Scars veterans and Khans. All of the killings shared the same pattern, a single banestrike round fired with breathtaking precision, its perpetrator unseen by those involved. Only a single report speaks of an identity for the killer. The testimony of Munokhoi, the Black Hound, claims it lies with the saboteur known as the *Interfector*, whom he tracked and confronted, but was unable to strike down.

Of those White Scars killed, there seemed at first little rhyme nor reason beyond the opportunistic murder of enemy assets. However, hindsight and a knowledge of events that would shortly overtake the Vth Legion grants us a different view, for all of the White Scars officers killed were known to be those most vehemently opposed to the spread of the warrior lodges within their Brotherhoods. Indeed, at least two of these officers were to be replaced with Terran-born veterans who had fought with the Legion since the days when the Vth Legion had regularly fought alongside the Warmaster and bore Horus some loyalty. This was to have dire repercussions for the White Scars, tipping the scales of the brief insurrection that would later take place over Prospero just enough for it to cause as much damage as possible to the Legion without breaking it or seeing it fall into Horus' hands. Once again, the full motivation behind the Alpha Legion's actions remains unknown.

not yet willing to die, the *Hawkstar* set course away from both the vast Alpha Legion fleet and the Khagan's ships on the far side of the system, for even the lowliest of void-craft would likely have overwhelmed the battered cruiser were it to be caught by the enemy. Taking note of the Alpha Legion's own ploy, the *Hawkstar* limped out of the gravitic shadow of Chondax Alpha-Secundus to the Mandeville belt between the inner and outer systems before straining its damaged warp engines to open a passage to the outermost regions of Chondax where the Khagan and his fleet were passing the orbit of far-off Phemus.

The return of the *Hawkstar* and a few other errant ships was a small blessing among the Legion's misfortunes, and would coincide with the arrival of ill-tidings for the Khagan. A message had been received direct from the astropaths attached to the VIth Legion, the Space Wolves. Leman Russ and his warriors were hard-pressed in the Alaxxes Nebula, under attack from another fleet of Alpha Legion craft, and the Wolf Lord had sent for the Khagan to support him. The VIth Legion, just like so many of the Legions, had long neglected any ties with the White Scars. The two Legions were all but strangers to each other. Few among them could claim to have fought together in all the years of the Great Crusade, and the clumsy courtesy of his message betrayed Leman Russ' lack of regard. He deigned to call for them only when no other choice presented itself, with little concern for his brother's trials. To Jaghatai Khan and the White Scars he did not call for brothers in arms, but instead had issued a summons for a subordinate.

Despite the nature of the Wolf Lord's summons, here was a chance for revenge, for the open and straightforward battle thus far denied them, but one that asked for absolute trust in the Wolf Lord despite those accusations levelled at him by the Warmaster's previous entreaties. It seemed that few of his brothers had cared for Jaghatai Khan or the White Scars except as tools for their own ambitions. Horus wished to chain him, the Alpha Legion to leash him, and Dorn to command him – each demanded his loyalty like a resource to be haggled over. Each was keen to point out the dire consequences of ignoring their summons, with threats levelled against both his Legion and the Imperium itself, and laid the consequences at his feet. His choice would place the White Scars at the mercy of the ambitions of a faction that cared little for them, either as minions of Horus' ambition or servitors of the Emperor's inscrutable plans, or his inaction would see the doom of the Imperium.

Of all of those of the Khan's brothers that might have called upon his loyalty, he had heard nothing save dire and ominous rumours of the one which he most anxiously sought news of – Magnus the Red, Sorcerer king of Prospero and as much an outsider to those of his brothers that sought to rule the Imperium as himself. The two had ever been bonded by the disdain of many of their fellow Primarchs, not simply by loyalty to the Imperium they served but also as allies and travellers along strange paths. Now it would seem that the Imperium had turned upon the Crimson King, either in outright assault or by permitting a rogue Primarch to dispense his own justice, Jaghatai Khan could not know the truth of it. Yet, with the return of the *Hawkstar*, the old wisdom of Chogoris loomed in his mind – *Under blue heaven, empires rise and then they fall. Heroes cannot die.* The Khagan knew where he must go.

The assembled might of the White Scars, a host upon whom the fate of the Imperium rested, turned silently in the void, aligning upon some distant star. They ran in close formation, rigged for war with guns at the ready and colours bright and clear. All across the fleet, the warriors of Chogoris prepared themselves, for the Khagan's orders had been passed throughout the armada, they went now to war, perhaps the greatest war they would ever face. There was no more confusion, no doubt left among the gathered Khans and warriors. They were no longer at bay, but loosed like an eagle to the hunt, talons extended to strike. Terra called them to its side and the Warmaster summoned them to battle, on the Khagan's word an Emperor and a Tyrant waited. But these were the White Scars, the ordu of Jaghatai, they were no man's slaves. They were on their own, as they had always been, and they would seek their own truth.

They would go to Prospero, and the Imperium would burn.

Of Emperors and Lies

In total, the void battle known to history as the Chondax Engagement had lasted a little over eight hours. The entire campaign, from the arrival of the Alpha Legion fleet to the departure of Jaghatai Khan lasted but four days. Total casualties among the two Legions involved are far lower than those of similar battles. Where the Isstvan massacres and the Battle for Calth would decimate the participants, the fighting in Chondax served only to hone the warriors of the Khagan, winnowing out the weakest and least fit. Indeed, their first real losses would come at their own hands in the space above Magnus' grave, a crucible of their own making.

For such a short incident its impact on the wider war is staggering, not for the events of the battle itself but for those tragedies it allowed to occur and the promise of salvation it left stillborn. In the Alaxxes Nebula, the Wolves of Russ were battered and kept from intervening in the wider war, though they were not destroyed as Horus had hoped. With this disaster vanished any hope that the Loyalist cause might undertake a grand counter-offensive.

With Ultramar besieged, Rogal Dorn ensconced on Terra and both the Dark Angels and Blood Angels all but vanished, few large offensive forces remained. Russ, though often decried by his brothers as a crude and vulgar commander, was among those few of the Primarchs whose loyalty was beyond reproach, and even after the brutal losses incurred during the Prospero campaign he still commanded one of the most ferocious Legions, and was the only one with significant experience in combat with other Legiones Astartes forces. Yet without the support of the White Scars, a surprise assault by the Alpha Legion left the Wolf Lord reeling and on the defensive, guaranteeing Horus a free hand in the galactic north to consolidate his power base.

But to consider the battle a victory for Horus is to fail to see how Jaghatai Khan's choice harmed the rebel cause. At best, the battle's result can be considered a pyrrhic victory for Horus' nascent rebellion, for while Jaghatai Khan's choice left the Space Wolves at the mercy of the Alpha Legion, they also removed them from Horus' camp, depriving him of a full Legion of elite warriors. Rogal Dorn, acting as the seneschal of Terra, was denied the ability to bring a quick end to the war, but so equally was Horus. Though it may be considered disloyal to write such words as these, it might have proved less destructive for the Imperium had Horus been able to press for a quick victory, sparing the worlds of Mankind from seven years of cataclysmic struggle. Jaghatai chose neither the Loyalist's nor the Traitor's path, and in so doing he saved neither himself nor the wider Imperium from any measure of pain.

To place the blame for these consequences solely at the feet of Jaghatai Khan is unfair, for his actions are to a large degree dictated by those of the Alpha Legion. Despite all of the resources spent on discovering the full plans of the Alpha Legion and their mysterious Primarch, we still know precious

The Alaxxes Nebula

Even as the Khagan battled the Alpha Legion over Chondax Prime, Leman Russ of the Space Wolves was engaged by a similar fleet bearing the mark of the Hydra at the Alaxxes Nebula. However, unlike the incident at Chondax, the Alpha Legion showed no hesitation in engaging the Space Wolves in direct battle. Their goal in this engagement seems more explicitly the destruction of the enemy without recourse to any form of coercion. Indeed, there is little to no record of any communication between Leman Russ and any commander of the Alpha Legion. By the time Leman Russ saw fit to contact his brother Primarch seeking aid, the battle is known to have gone badly for the VIth Legion, with significant losses to their fleet contingent, and with the Alpha Legion making full use of the element of surprise while unhindered by the need to suborn their foe.

The events of this battle and the Khagan's decision, which were to have their own consequences for the larger civil war, bear discussion at another juncture where proper time and consideration can be given to them. However, it is worth noting that as the fleet battle at Alaxxes occurs at roughly the same time index as the fighting at Chondax, the Alpha Legion were capable of operating a number of armada-sized fleet contingents simultaneously. Even accounting for the inclusion of a number of Q-ships and other disguised civilian craft, this was a fleet well in excess of that fielded by any other Legion. Moreover, as Legion policy, and the records of both those White Scars and Space Wolves elements that managed to board Alpha Legion craft during these engagements show, both fleets maintained a sizable Legiones Astartes security force aboard the capital class vessels. This would lead us to believe that not only did the Alpha Legion's fleet exceed pre-Heresy estimations, but also their recruitment figures must have been grossly underestimated by Imperium military census counts.

The Lost and the Forsaken

The withdrawal of Jaghatai Khan and his fleet from the Chondax system marks the end of the fighting there in most conventional records. Few scholars make any further reference to the Chondax system during the years of the Horus Heresy. Indeed, even today it is considered a desolate backwater of no strategic worth. However, there were small warbands of White Scars active within the system for a number of years after the withdrawal, far longer than most accounts acknowledge.

These stubborn bands of survivors were forced to turn to hit and run warfare, relying on their speed to keep them ahead of their pursuers. Most numbered little more than a few dozen warriors and were quickly reduced to scavenging the wreckage of past battles to remain combat capable, in many ways aping the tactics of the Orks they had hunted to extinction only a short time before. Most of these holdouts were exterminated by the Alpha Legion within a few short weeks, but a few lasted much longer.

The last such group of White Scars survivors to have been rescued from Chondax was discovered in 017.M31, ten long years after the Alpha Legion had abandoned the system, by a Raven Guard patrol cruiser seeking the trail of the Traitor fleets fleeing the failed Siege of Terra. Having been trapped on Irra Minor for a decade, the warriors of the Brotherhood of the Black Axe, led by Sengur One-arm, who was known to his troops as the Iron Khan due to the patchwork augmetics that sustained him, initially assumed the Raven Guard to be a hostile force. A long, solitary war against Alpha Legion headhunters, Dark Mechanicum hunter-killer servitors and foul apparitions of the Warp had made a virtue of paranoia. It was only after a short and abortive skirmish that the XIXth Legion warriors managed to convince them of their intent. Sengur Khan and his surviving eight warriors were invited to Terra by no less a personage than Rogal Dorn to receive honours for their valour, but they instead chose to return quietly to Chogoris without fanfare.

little of the truth in this regard. Horus' orders to Alpharius at Chondax are now a matter of record, much data having fallen into the hands of the Scouring fleets in the wake of the battle for Terra, but this simply makes it clear how far the Alpha Legion diverged from his wishes. It must be asked: what did they think to gain from this betrayal?

They themselves made no attempt to benefit from its conclusion, either in terms of territory, war materiel or political power. Indeed, it is difficult to see how they might have done so, for the actions of the White Scars promoted only chaos and destruction. Is this what Alpharius sought? To prolong the war and weaken whomever might eventually take the throne? Few within the borders of the Imperium would benefit from such an outcome, but then who is to know where Alpharius' true masters were to be found?

One other theory exists, though its credence is doubted by the scholars of this latter Imperium. That theory maintains that the Alpha Legion were not the unified force many saw them as, that within their shadowy ranks there was a hidden war taking place that sought to change the Legion's path. It is unknown who might have been able to challenge Alpharius for leadership of his own Legion, and how they would rally his own sons against him, though perhaps the Legion's penchant for secrecy and misdirection would allow a canny leader to manipulate it from within. Yet, this theory explains much regarding the strange choices of the Alpha Legion during the Chondax campaign.

This then is the legacy of the battle for Chondax. Destruction and the end of a golden age, perhaps the last golden age of Mankind. Malevolence in its purest form, a calculated and deliberate intent to cause harm and misery. We have spoken of many evils in the course of this history of the Horus Heresy, of Daemons and dark gods bent on the destruction of Man. Yet the greatest of evils, the worst malevolence, is perhaps to be found in the hearts of men.

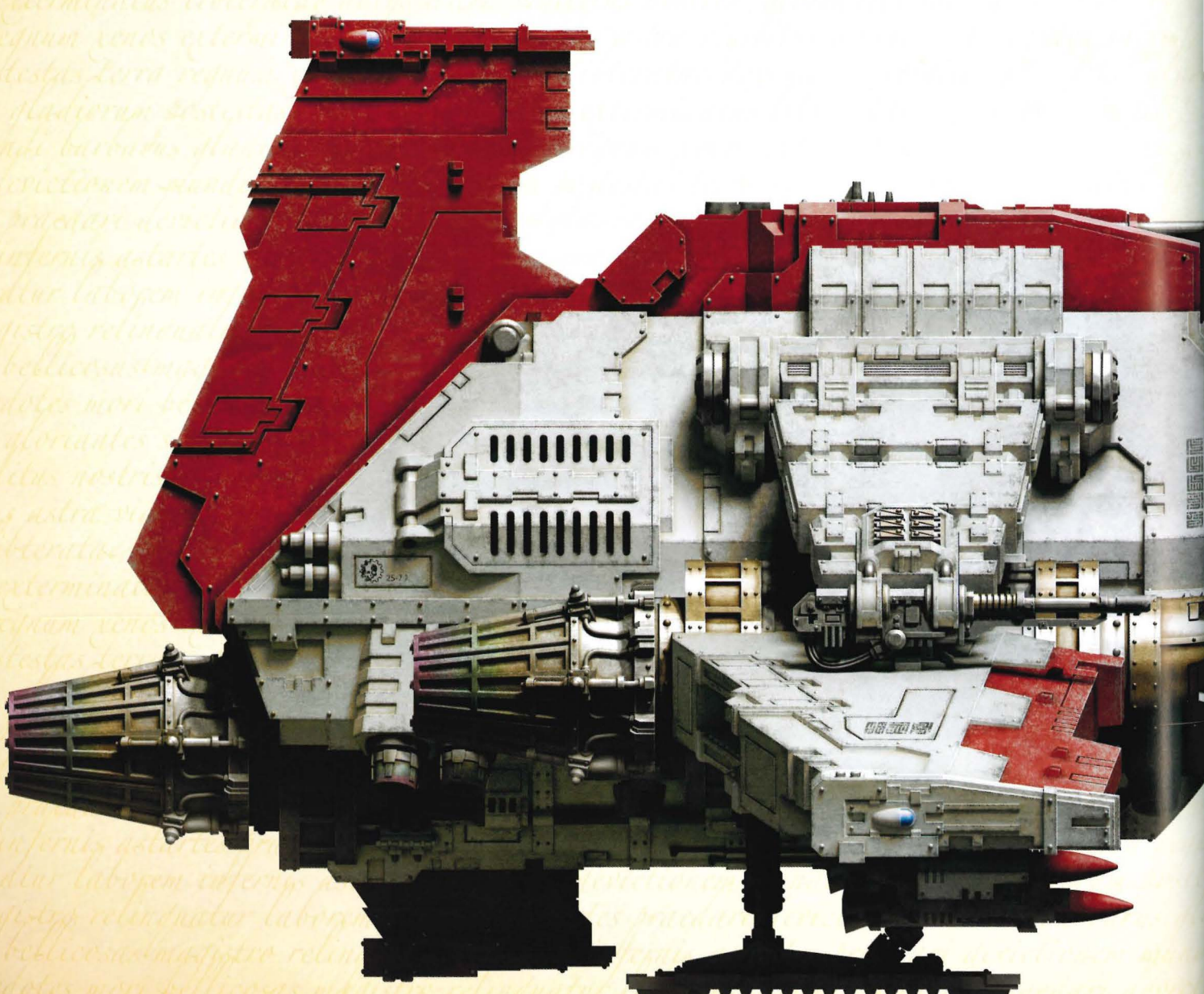
White Scars Brotherhoods

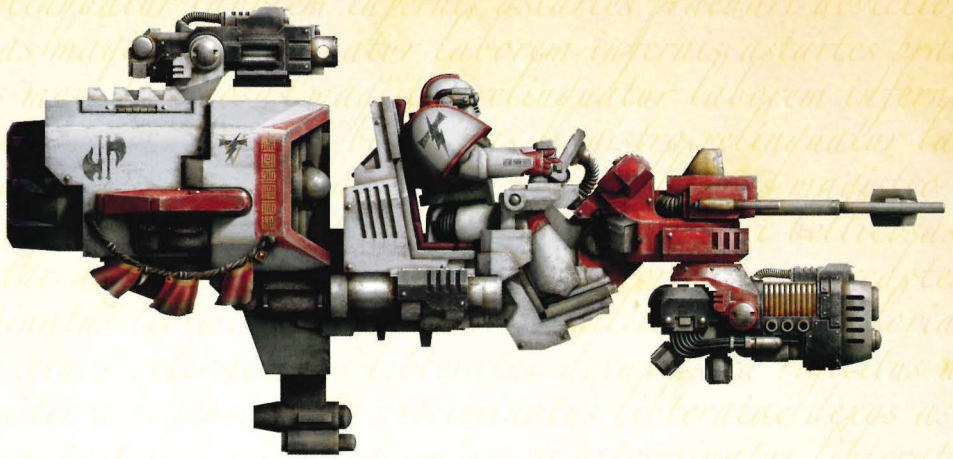
Each Brotherhood of the White Scars is a highly mobile task force unto itself, endowed with the means to transport its complement of Legiones Astartes warriors to the battlefield with a speed that was the hallmark of their Legion. As such, the White Scars were known to favour the use of aerial and contragravity vehicles of all kinds, with a noted preference for smaller craft due to the lowering maintenance requirements and greater manoeuvrability of such vehicles. Their usage of massed squadrons of Scimitar, Shamshir and Falcata class jetbikes is well known and documented, but the various Brotherhoods also made use of large numbers of Land Speeders, Fire Raptor gunships and even armoured vehicles of certain patterns.

Indeed, some Brotherhoods were even known to specialise in the use of mobile artillery, experts at the rapid displacement of batteries after the completion of a fire mission, and at providing close range support bombardments.

Among all of the Emperor's Legions, the White Scars were the most enthusiastic adopters of the newer Thunderhawk pattern gunships, smaller mass produced replacements for the ancient and vast Stormbird pattern dropships that had served the earliest incarnations of the Legiones Astartes since their departure from Terra itself. These vehicles, while less powerful and imposing than the huge Stormbirds, were more easily customised by the Gan-khan of the armoury to suit the needs of the White Scars, and far more easily maintained and supplied on the long, solitary campaigns favoured by the Vth Legion. By the time of the Chondax campaign, most of the larger Brotherhoods of the Vth Legion had been assigned at least a single Thunderhawk, with some fielding enough to transport their entire complement into battle without recourse to more cumbersome landing craft.

Integral as they were to the mobile style of warfare and operation favoured by the White Scars, these vehicles were the focus of many of the small rituals within the Brotherhoods. Upon their armoured flanks they bore the marks of those who lived and died as warriors of the ordu of Jaghatai, serving as the shrines for the dead and fortresses for the living. Each bore a name and history the equal of any other veteran of the Legion, and many enjoyed a fame more widespread among the Legion than the warriors who crewed them.





White Scars Proteus Land Speeder

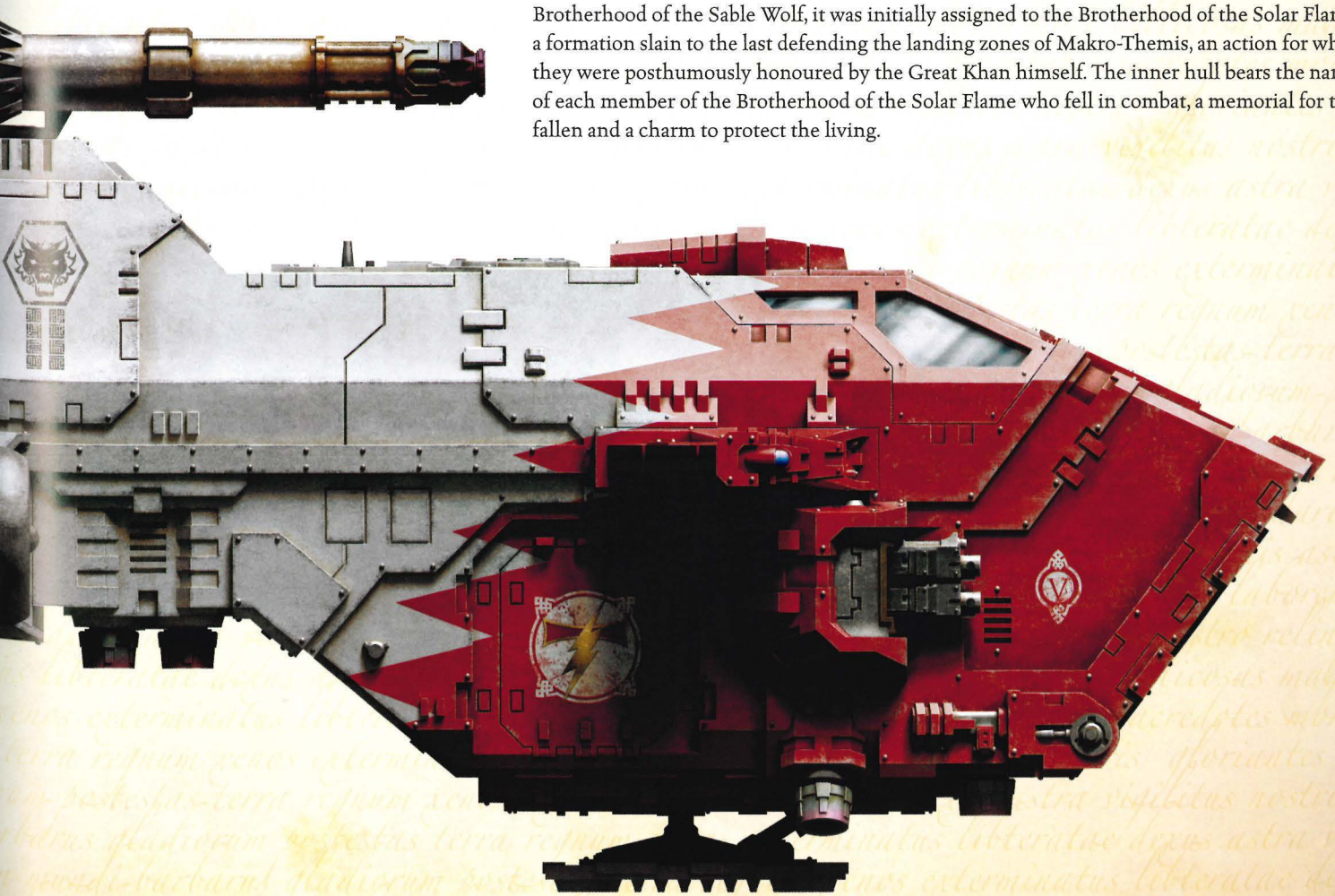
Harrow-03

Operated by the Brotherhood of the Black Axe as part of its forward assault squadrons, this Land Speeder has been crippled in combat eight times. Despite this, the crew assigned to it has rarely suffered more than minor injuries and the vehicle has been swiftly returned to battle each time. Note the complex patterns and extensive glyphs applied as decoration.

White Scars Thunderhawk Gunship

Skyfire

The longest serving Thunderhawk within the Vth Legion, having seen combat for over 62 years since its initial deployment as one of the first test units. Currently serving with the Brotherhood of the Sable Wolf, it was initially assigned to the Brotherhood of the Solar Flame, a formation slain to the last defending the landing zones of Makro-Themis, an action for which they were posthumously honoured by the Great Khan himself. The inner hull bears the names of each member of the Brotherhood of the Solar Flame who fell in combat, a memorial for the fallen and a charm to protect the living.



A Gate Unsealed

"Most dangerous to the Truth that shelters Mankind is not the liar, but rather the honest man.
For the first fears what comes when truth is overturned, while the latter fears only the failure of his convictions."

Attr. Fridrek Neetcher, Ancient Terran scholar

"Horus was a monster, a traitor and a fool, but in his own way he was the most honest of his kin.
He did not deny the ambition that smouldered in his heart, but merely grasped it awkwardly."

Artor Calanax, scholar and theoritician of the Imperial Court

Knives in the Dark

This then was Horus' quiet declaration of war, the first knife planted in the back of his father's empire. All that had come before had been nothing but whispers in dark rooms and half-formed plans, but here were the first faltering steps of rebellion, a bloody prelude to an age of fire and darkness that would sweep across the Imperium. He had openly declared war on the Emperor that had found him and raised him up, on the brothers that had fought alongside him, and in the manner of that declaration offered both friends and allies a vision of what he intended for the Imperium. His chosen tools were not those of a warrior, not the blade and bolt that had carved a new Imperium, but rather the lies and the darkness that lurks between the stars.

That which had been undertaken at the Warmaster's command at Chondax and Signus could not be undone, could not be recalled or hidden. Horus had opened the levee of the past and unleashed such a tide of hidden grudges and smothered grievances that it could not be stopped. Just as he himself had acted to court those he would have as friends and to remove those he saw as threats, so too would his cohorts, setting into motion a chain of events that led inevitably to that future we now inhabit. Nor could his tools be so easily returned to their rest once loosed. Lies now laid like a shroud over the Imperium, cloaking the Traitors' first steps and leaving the Loyalists confused and scattered, while the Daemons of the Warp laid a claim of their own upon many worlds of the Emperor's domain.

But for those who had fought in this bloody prelude, who had witnessed the opening of the gate, there was yet a long and dark road to walk with few lights to guide their steps.

A Future written in Blood

From the ashes of Signus, which Horus had intended as a funeral pyre, the Blood Angels rose. They were not stronger for the trial they had endured, now a fractured beacon for a dying Imperium, their light casting ominous shadows on the future, but they were perhaps wiser. Signus had taught them a harsh lesson on the cost of trust and the folly of overconfidence, with a price marked by the thousands of dead brothers fallen to secure victory. It was a lesson taken well to heart by many within the Legion, one that would haunt their future dealings with even the closest of allies – for if one brother could be turned and proven treacherous then so might another. Once open and forthright, the Blood Angels began to close in upon themselves, to harbour their secrets close and to see those who did not wear the crimson as suspect.

From the burnt and ruined crucible that was Signus, Sanguinius would take a slow and winding path to meet his brother, Roboute Guilliman, at the foundation of a new Imperium, at the end of hope and a rebirth of glory. Here the Lord of Ultramar intended to plant a new flag, to turn the war to a direction of his choosing. At the time there were some who whispered that perhaps Guilliman had designs not dissimilar to those of the fallen Warmaster, to stand at the head of his own empire, a design that could not properly exist while his father yet lived. Of course, in these latter years, with the fall of the Warmaster, there are few who dare speak ill of the Lord of Ultramar as he gathers more of the Imperium's sceptres under his gaze.

For a time, the Blood Angels would linger at the side of the Ultramarines and others as Guilliman sought to build a force to rival that of Horus. The Lord of Ultramar, ever shy of the open throne, made Sanguinius his reluctant Emperor and placed him at the head of Imperium Secundus. This shadow-Imperium would last but a short span, assaulted from without and within by enemies and allies alike, and would grant the Blood Angels little respite or sanctuary. Even in the heart of Ultramar, there were battles to be fought and enemies to be confronted, for no part of the Imperium remained free from war. Yet the sickness that had taken hold of the IXth Legion at Signus would not be banished by the simple solace of kin and battle.

For all the wiles of Guilliman and those others gathered to his banner, there would be no lasting sanctuary at Macragge. The main host of the Blood Angels, following their sire, would be brought forth from Ultramar to the final stage of the Horus Heresy. Like a lodestone hung at the neck of the Imperium, Terra would draw the Blood Angels and others unto it. There, at the Eternity Gate of the Imperial Palace, a reckoning was waiting.

An Unanswered Question

Much like his brother, Jaghatai Khan was to secure little more than a pyrrhic victory at Chondax, a boast that he had hurt his foe no less than he himself had been hurt, but few trophies of any real consequence. The Great Khan would leave Chondax in search of answers, but at the corpse of Prospero, the throneworld of his old friend Magnus the Red, he was to find only more questions. Those he had once counted as trusted friends had proven false and those once rivals might now be desperately needed allies, but the price of trust had grown steep indeed, for this would be an age where true loyalty held value greater than any treasure of forgotten ages. To seek his answers, the Great Khan took his Legion into the space between the pages of history, the uncharted and unseen edges of space where they could hunt for the truth on their own terms.

The Khan would not be the only one whose questions went unanswered, for both those who sought his allegiance and his destruction wondered to whom he would rally when the time came. At Chondax he had defended himself and his Legion, professing no binding loyalty to any one cause, leaving

Of the Hosts of the Ninth

Sanguinius took with him five sixths of the IXth Legion to the war in Signus. He left behind a little more than 20,000 warriors, scattered in small companies and Hosts across the galaxy. These detachments would have no word of their sire for nearly a decade, suffering as did the Raven Guard and Iron Hands the wound of loss. Yet those who remained behind would not suffer the undying hunger of Signus, would not know the shame that overtook their brethren nor see the fall of their sire. These Unblooded, as some would come to call them, would remain apart from their brethren and even those who found their way to Terra would seem to the survivors of Signus a different breed, still holding to the untarnished pride of years now past.

Of those extant detachments at the time of the Signus campaign, here follows a list of the largest and most well-known, though it should be noted that several dozen smaller detachments existed, either attached to other Great Crusade fleets or attending small outposts across the galaxy:

Baal – Most prominent of all of the Blood Angels outposts was their adopted home world of Baäl, both for its significance as a symbol and the industrial capacity of its manufactoria. Placed as sentinels over the world and its system were approximately 3,000 warriors of the Legion as well as a larger force of armed serfs and other Legion auxiliaries. Within a few short months of the outbreak of the Horus Heresy proper, Baal would find itself inundated by the remnants of the Shattered Legions that had fallen at Isstvan and ravaged by the gnawing dread that perhaps their own sire had fallen as well. Later encircled by the forces of the Traitor Warmaster, Baal would endure years of isolation and two attempts by its foes to seize the system by storm before word would reach them of Sanguinius' survival.

Canopus – Second only to Baal in its size and strength, Canopus was a major asset to the IXth Legion. It hosted a garrison of two full companies and several thousand more auxiliaries, and harboured a production capacity equivalent to that of a lesser Forge World. As such, it fell under assault by Traitor forces of the Sons of Horus near the outbreak of the rebellion. The last word received from the system by Loyalist forces was in 008.M31, a fragmented signal speaking of desperation and defiance, and a sea of enemies beyond count. Those Loyalist forces to reach the system in the wake of Terra's defence and the beginning of the Scouring would report only ruin and ash, with no sign of survivors, with many assuming the sons of Sanguinius chose to destroy their facilities rather than allow them to fall into the hands of the Traitors.

Anvillus – The Blood Angels had long maintained a small honour guard on the Mechanicum Forge of Anvillus, a part of the long-standing treaty formed between the Primarch of the IXth Legion and the lords of Anvillus. Amounting to a demi-company in strength and afforded all the arts of Anvillus in its panoply, these warriors were amongst the best equipped in the Legion and a formidable force despite their small number. Their fate, however, remains unconfirmed even in these latter years, for all communication between them and Baal ceased with the outbreak of civil war between the various schismatic factions of the Anvillus Mechanicum, a conflict fomented and funded by Horus himself. Though order would eventually be restored to mighty Anvillus, the magos of that world will not speak of the fate of the Blood Angels that once stood surety for their vows of friendship with Baal. Yet once every year, on the exact anniversary of the outbreak of Anvillus' own internal strife, a warp-barge in the livery of Anvillus arrives at Baal bearing tribute in the form of exactly one half an old Legiones Astartes company's worth of arms and armour.

Saiph – Saiph was often overlooked, seen as little more than a simple recruiting ground where the unending wars of the primitive world supply bodies for the Legion. Its garrison amounted to little more than a handful of true Blood Angels and was overseen by Medicae Primus Anastor Kendral, a veteran of the Battle for Kiy-buran. When the World Eaters came to claim the world for their own, they would find no sign of the garrison and assumed it fled, setting a small watch of their own before beginning operations to harvest the youth of Saiph to restore the losses of the early campaigns of rebellion. They would reap little reward for their labours, however, for a savage guerrilla campaign waged by the Blood Angels hidden on Saiph hampered their every effort. Indeed, such was the savagery of the warriors of the IXth Legion and their allies among the tribes of Saiph that the World Eaters would eventually evacuate and abandon the world in 012.M31.

106th Expeditionary Fleet – Largest of all of the Expeditionary fleets maintained by the Legion that were not recalled to join the Primarch after Kayvas, the 106th included five companies of the Blood Angels as well as a similar force of grey-armoured Word Bearers. On campaign far to the galactic west, the 106th played no part in the initial fighting of the Horus Heresy, and many in the Loyalist camp assumed that Word Bearers treachery had seen the end of the Blood Angels attached to the fleet, a tragedy made unremarkable by the grim necessity of those years. Yet in 010.M31, the Word Bearers' outposts on Sarcossa and nearby worlds that guarded the approach to Colchis began to fail and go dark, signalling the return of the lost 106th Expeditionary Fleet. Now numbering barely half of their original number, the Blood Angels fought their way to the nearby enclave of Medusa and took refuge with the Iron Hands, becoming a thorn in the side of the Traitor armies that held the far western satraps of the Imperium in thrall.

Of Brotherhoods Near and Far

The majority of the White Scars were marshalled for the Chondax campaign, but this left a significant strength of the Vth Legion at large in the empty places of the galaxy. For many Legions, the sudden disappearance of their sire and the bulk of the Legion might have left such remnants crippled and lacking in strategic momentum, but the White Scars were long used to independent operations. The sudden absence of Jaghatai Khan did not limit the ambition of his commanders, and each command paused not even a moment before continuing to wage their own personal wars while their Primarch sought answers among the stars.

Of the most prominent Brotherhoods and Hordes engaged in independent campaigns across the galaxy, there follows a brief summation of the most active and renowned:

Duua Sokhat Noyan-khan's Horde – Duua Sokhat commanded one of the smallest Hordes, numbering in total some 2,000 warriors. Known for his reckless command style, which demonstrated a certain blindness to some tactical necessities, Sokhat enjoyed a near-fanatical respect from his followers for always leading from the very tip of his advance. His Horde was assigned to dark space reconnaissance along the northern-most edge of the Imperium's new borders, a position perilously close to the Isstvan system. As with most White Scars commands, the lack of regular contact kept Duua Sokhat and his warriors unaware of the Warmaster's rebellion despite their proximity, and upon their return to Imperium space saw them fall prey to ambush at the hands of the Traitors. Sokhat would survive, along with the core of his Horde, becoming a constant threat to Traitor supply convoys and isolated outposts.

Jirghadai Noyan-khan's Horde – Tasked with charting and harrying xenos infestations along the lower coreward arc of advance for the Great Crusade, Jirghadai and his 6,000 warriors were heavily engaged at the time of the Isstvan massacres. The heavy assault companies that followed in their wake, largely composed of World Eaters and Death Guard warriors, turned on the White Scars without warning, severely mauling the Horde. Yet, with the Noyan-khan and his command Keshig trapped and surrounded, the newly revealed Traitors suddenly departed, allowing the decimated Horde to withdraw. Jirghadai and his surviving warriors would eventually reach Nocturne, taking refuge with elements of the Salamanders Legion in order to resupply and replenish their ranks. In the years following the Horus Heresy, it would become clear that the withdrawal of their attackers came at Horus' direct order, for the attack violated his wish that the White Scars be turned rather than slaughtered, hinting at the deep rifts between the various commanders of the rebel host.

Brotherhood of the Great Eye – Assigned to the 905th Expeditionary Fleet alongside a large contingent of the Sons of Horus, the Brotherhood had long served with the warriors of the Warmaster. When Horus declared his rebellion openly, Nayaga Khan pledged his support for the Warmaster, either unaware or uncaring of the events occurring at Chondax, and joined the ranks of the Traitors. Nayaga Khan and his Brotherhood would take part in a number of battles under the flag of the Warmaster before being caught at resupply by Duua Sokhat and his Horde of Loyalist White Scars. None of the Brotherhood of the Great Eye are known to have survived the encounter.

Brotherhood of the Broken Shield – Having been deployed on deep-range scouting expeditions past the far eastern boundaries of known space in 002.M31, Bujir Khan had been removed from contact with his Legion for half a decade by the time of their return in 007.M31. The Khan had planned to bring his Brotherhood to Nostramo for resupply, only to find the sector embroiled in all-out war as the Dark Angels and the Night Lords sought to eradicate each other. In a repeat of the events of Chondax, Bujir Khan found himself courted by the Traitors with whispers of Jaghatai having joined Horus, and distrusted by the Lion and his proud officers as a base barbarian. Despite this, he and his Brotherhood would prove vital to the Loyalist victory in the distant Thramas Crusade.

reason enough for every faction to think he might yet be won to their side. Such was the madness of those dark years that the Primarch, once ignored by his kin, became the focus of so much intrigue, many lives on both sides of the conflict expended in the struggle to secure the Great Khan's loyalty, whether at the point of a sword or a pen. Yet Jaghatai Khan was to remain elusive for much of the so-called Dark Age, a spectre to be spoken of with dread or awe but rarely seen.

This self-imposed exile was to once again keep the White Scars far from the eyes of the mighty, but it did not keep them from the war. They occupied themselves with a star-hunt on a grand scale, striking targets both Traitor and Loyalist alike in their search for a truth to the rebellion, its villains and its victims. Though oft unnoticed during the chaotic years of the Horus Heresy, a number of worlds struck and pillaged along the spinward arm of the Maelstrom bear the hallmarks of their operations: the vast promethium yards of Orythane, the lesser Forge of Martius-Maximus and even the outer wards of the great hive cities of Lamrys. Each was hit in turn, their defenders drawn away or destroyed and their resources pillaged to resupply the battered Legion, for without the authority of the Divisio Militaris or the backing of Terra or the Warmaster, the White Scars were forced to turn to a more visceral authority to sustain their campaigns.

These hidden wars would occupy the Legion in one form or another for much of the Horus Heresy, keeping them from the glory of those battles that form the core of the Horus Heresy's legend. Yet, they would in time grant the Great Khan the wisdom he had sought, and he would make his fateful decision and bring his sons to Terra to tilt the balance of the scales of destiny.

A Rising Storm

Though Horus' actions had irrevocably changed both Legions, this was not the only legacy of his plans that would continue to haunt the Imperium. By his own hand and seal, he had let loose two evils that would prove as dangerous to the Imperium as any civil war, magnifying the destruction of that dark age. This was the true malignancy of the Horus Heresy, not simply that for his own wounded pride and base ambition he set loose the spectre of war upon the realm he had helped forge, but that he chose to ravage it so thoroughly and with such casual indifference to the suffering caused. The Warmaster spared no thought for the consequences of his actions, save that they might see him

placed upon the Imperium's bright throne, no remorse for the millennia of suffering that would be endured as a result of his ambition.

Most records of the Horus Heresy speak only of the Legiones Astartes and the other armies of the Imperium, of the devastation that was strewn in the wake of their battles, but for a moment let us see beyond the terrible kin-strife that enveloped the galaxy. For though the Great Crusade had driven the once powerful empires of many xenos breeds to the brink of collapse, they had not destroyed them all. Even as the Expeditionary fleets turned upon each other, the alien and the Outsider gathered their remaining strength and came forth once more to regain some measure of their lost glory. In the middle years of the rebellion, the so-called Age of Darkness, the borders of the Imperium contracted as more and more systems fell under the sway of xenos overlords and parasitic invaders. A new darkness fell across the worlds of Mankind, one that could only come to pass because of the Warmaster's actions, for it was only while the Imperium fought with itself that the alien could flourish.

That which Horus loosed at Signus to be his hunting dogs would also slip the leash and wreak havoc across an unready galaxy. For as Lorgar stirred up the tides of the Warp to make a storm to hide the movements of his co-conspirators, centred on the sacrifice of Calth, he woke a sleeping power that the Emperor Himself had striven so hard to hide. Warp rifts and Daemonic incursions would be reported across the Imperium over the course of the war, some a brief nightmare dispelled with the coming of a new dawn, but others would grow to envelop entire worlds. Indeed, some planets were so overwhelmed that the taint of the Warp took root in soil and branch – such worlds were doomed to a dire fate indeed, subsumed into the substance of the Warp itself. Even those that avoided such ends were changed forever by the touch of the Daemon, branded with a subtle taint that would linger for centuries, sometimes to produce a foul blossom of corruption and plunge it back into the claws of the Warp.

These twin curses were the true legacy of Chondax and Signus, the price this new Imperium must pay for Horus' hubris and pride. It is a scar that will likely never heal fully, never close and become as it once was. I fear it will be a malevolence that will only grow worse, perhaps some day to scar the very galaxy itself.

ADDENDA/087.M31 – War without End

The years of the Great Darkness have long since passed, and your humble author's years now grow short, yet the legend of the Horus Heresy still grows. I add one last record to this treatise, a final testament in the legacy of the rebellion that tore our Imperium apart. In 087.M31 the last Brotherhood returned to Imperium space, emerging from the Warp at the remote way-station of Theogranth in the southern reaches of this lesser Imperium. The Brotherhood of the Blue Hawk numbered a mere 132 warriors on its return, having been tasked with charting the southern rim for eventual Compliance by the Great Crusade, a task they had undertaken with exacting diligence. Yet here, at the moment of their triumph, they fell under attack by renegade warbands of the scattered Alpha Legion who had come to Theogranth looking to pillage supplies.

Shocked to find themselves at war with those they counted as brothers, the Brotherhood suffered badly in the battle, repulsing the Alpha Legion at the cost of much of their own strength. This was to be the last battle of the Legiones Astartes, the other Legions long since rendered down into separate Chapters by Guilliman's edict of the Second Founding. The last vicious stroke of the Horus Heresy, the final betrayal of brother against brother, for those that had survived the Age of Darkness no longer thought of the Traitor remnants as kin. Triumph was turned bitter by the spilt blood of their brethren, and victory was bought at a steep price. Only 28 of the White Scars would survive to reach Chogoris, there to learn of the full horror of the Horus Heresy, the crippling of the Imperium and the disappearance of their own Primarch in the years of tumult and war that followed it. They had set out at the height of the Imperium and returned to find it crushed, to find that the Legion they once knew no longer existed, replaced by a bastard creation of necessity.

When word of their return reached distant Terra, Roboute Guilliman sent for them, seeking to make a spectacle of this lost Brotherhood and to see them reinstated into the new order of the Imperium. Yet, all that would arrive at Terra was a short missive, penned by Yeke Negurin Khan before he and the warriors of the Brotherhood of the Blue Hawk departed Chogoris, never to return. To this day no sign of their death has ever been found, and it is possible that they still make war in the Emperor's name far beyond the shrunken borders of our Imperium.

"We shall return to our lost Crusade, out beyond the edge of the maps where the Warhawk waits for us still. Do not grieve for us, or for those now passed, for we may yet linger many a year in our struggle, and in the uncertainty of our demise lies the salvation of our Great Crusade. For while one of the Emperor's Legions still fights in His name, the Crusade is not ended and those lives spent in its cause will not have been in vain."

Yeke Negurin Khan, Cmdr. Brotherhood of the Blue Hawk, 087.M31

The Blood Angels

Numeration: The IXth Legion

Primogenitor: Sanguinius

Cognomen: (Prior): The Revenant Legion, The Eaters of the Dead (Since Sanguinius assumed his place as sire of the Legion, these once commonplace names are considered an insult to the pride of the IXth Legion)

Observed Strategic Tendencies: Orbital Drop Operations, Shock Assault Campaigns and Macro-scale Decapitation Strikes. Prior to Sanguinius' return, the IXth Legion was instead more widely known for its use as a tool of attrition-based warfare in war zones otherwise considered too hazardous for normal operations.

Noteworthy Domains: Terran enclaves, Baal, Canopus IV, Saiph

Allegiance: Fedelitas Constantus

'They call themselves angels, the dregs of a thousand hells raised up and given shining armour, bright swords and masks of fair and elegant form. Yet I wonder, have they worn those masks so long that they forget what it is that waits beneath, that monstrous aspect that yet yearns to be set free?'

Attr. Marlehck Brandt, Remembrancer attached IXth Legion 811.M30 - 848.M30

Fate is a cruel master, for no matter how much his prey might twist or turn, no matter what triumphs they might rise to or what trials they overcome, he will still drag them down. The Blood Angels struggled against the fate written into their very genes, defied the role the Emperor chose for them and dared to believe they could transcend the darkness that followed them. They took the worst of Mankind and made of it something bright and true, they rose above what they had once been and stood astride the fledgling Imperium like the guardian angels for which they were named. Yet, nurtured in their successes were the seeds of their fall, in the jealousy of the fallen Warmaster who saw in them everything he himself had thrown away. The opening stroke of the Horus Heresy brought the Blood Angels to their knees, and the tragedies that were to follow would shatter their resolve and leave them broken. Such is the nature of the IXth Legion that they did not surrender to despair nor surrender to darkness, but rose again and again.

What might have Sanguinius and his sons achieved were it not for the dark fate brought upon them by treachery and genetics? What brilliant flower might have bloomed from the carnage and blood of their origins? That unknown future is yet another casualty of Horus' civil war, the Blood Angels left to endure the slow degeneration of their noble line with the stubborn pride that is their hallmark.

Origins: The Dregs of Old Night

There are many noble legends of the Unification Wars, of the battles where the Emperor's newborn Legions swept aside all who opposed Him before them. Among these tales there are none to be found that mention the IXth Legion, only grim rumours and half-heard whispers. Where the first companies of the other proto-Legions were blooded in Albia, Yndonesia and Franc alongside the massed ranks of the Thunder Warriors, the IXth was absent, granted a role as vital as it was unsightly. The old IXth Legion served the Emperor as an inferno serves a general upon the battlefield; they did not conquer but instead ravaged, growing and growing as they went, a weapon that could not be directed or controlled, only endured.

Few in number, the early Legions fought as mere vanguards to larger forces, a sharp dagger alongside the blunt sledgehammer of the armies of Unification. They were the fulcrum upon which battles turned, the point of control, waging small scale battles by precision strike and audacious raids. The IXth Legion was made in a different image. Even in their earliest days they were among the largest of the proto-Legions and when they made war it was like the sudden arrival of a tsunami, sweeping away the opposition in a flurry of brutal assaults. They found themselves deployed to the most dangerous war zones, to those accursed regions ravaged by the rad-phages and chem strains of Old Night, places where only the most twisted and debased breeds of Mankind still lived. In the wastelands that existed outside of history's spotlight they held the line, alone and unnoticed while the Emperor drove home His grand conquests.

This grim fate was no accident, no arbitrary choice made by a distant general, for each of the Legions had been granted genetic tools to fit the roles for them by the Emperor, and the IXth was no exception. Where other Legions took only the best recruits, princes and champions among the conquered nations of Old Earth, and produced but few initiates, the IXth Legion took in the hordes of dispossessed and broken, and made of them an army of angels. Scarred by so many long generations mired in the rad-zones and sunken fortresses of Terra's poisoned wilds, these creatures were no longer entirely human, but horribly mutated beasts that the tyrants of Old Earth had driven out and hunted. Yet, from such base materials emerged a breed of Legiones Astartes uniformly tall and fair, their features sculpted in stern elegance.

The unique genetic template of the IXth Legion's as yet unknown sire seemed to favour the twisted and warped, though the pain it inflicted on those inducted into the Legion was more than most could bear. As those weakened by years of exposure to the most horrific rad-zones and poisons rarely survived such an ordeal, the number of recruits that endured to become Legiones Astartes of the IXth were few. Yet, unlike the other Legions, the IXth cast their net wide, they claimed entire tribes of wastelanders, prisoners of war and the long train of hopefuls that always followed in their wake. The bloody-handed Apothecaries plied their knives without rest to keep the Legion at fighting strength in even the most hellish war zones, and though the legend of the IXth languished, its ranks did not.

Historia Terra Regnum

The Cult of the Reborn

Wherever the IXth Legion made camp, pilgrims followed, a vast throng of the forgotten and the twisted that often far outnumbered the warriors of the Legion. They came to cast off the lumpen forms that had been their burden and curse, the legacy granted them by Old Night, to bay and shout at the IXth Legion that they might be chosen to be reborn. They came to pass through blood and torment, and be reborn as angels of the new Emperor.

At first these gatherings were little more than mobs of desperate wanderers, but as the crowds grew, the Red Brothers began to appear among their number. Robed in crimson they sang the praises of the IXth Legion from afar, collecting the cast-off fragments of armour and stray shell casings the Legiones Astartes left behind as relics. They wove a shell of religion and mysticism around the Emperor's angels, indoctrinating those that came to seek redemption and bringing order to the mobs. They preached a bloody creed of sacrifice and blood, offered up to the red-handed angels they worshipped, that they might join them in an eternity of war. Such a heady dream was to prove a potent lure, profiting Legion and cult both.

For a time, they became indispensable to the nascent Legion, herding the faithful and growing fat from tithes and bribes from those they preached to. Though the warriors of the IXth looked upon them with disinterest, the Red Brothers used their influence and wealth to rule the pilgrim hordes that trailed the Legion and to decide who would be presented to the Apothecaries. Yet their time was limited, for in the last days of the wars of Unification, the Emperor Himself decreed the Imperial Truth, denouncing superstition of all breeds. In the end, the silken-canopied caravans of the Red Brothers were burned by the hands of the IXth Legion themselves, as they turned their guns upon the priests and their devotees with callous indifference, for the Unification Wars had bred in their hearts a cold and grim demeanour, and a casual disregard for suffering and death.

Even as their ranks swelled, the dark rumours that followed them grew as well, for the Emperor's legacy had endowed them with other, darker, gifts. These gifts were also to grant them a new epithet among the rank and file of the Emperor's mortal armies, the Eaters of the Dead. For in the wake of each battle, the elegant forms of the IXth Legion haunted the field of battle long after the fighting had ceased, seeking out the finest among the fallen and feasting upon their flesh and blood. Many of the victories fought to bring Unification to Old Earth were marred by the sight of blood-smeared angels stalking the fallen and wounded champions of the enemy across fields choked with corpses, though few among their detractors realised the purpose of this grim fixation. For this too was part of the Emperor's grand design, for through the augmentations that had transformed them, the IXth Legion stole their enemy's power from them, absorbing their knowledge and skill and making it their own. In the broken places where they fought, alone and far from aid, this trait brought them priceless information and made even the most raw recruits battle ready. Yet the macabre reputation they had gained hung about them like a shroud, lessening their achievements. They had been created to fight monsters, alone and in the darkest places, but in doing so they risked becoming creatures even more foul than those they fought.

The Revenant Legion

The wars of Unification swept out into the Sol system like a storm, unstoppable and wild, and so too went the IXth Legion. Despite being among the largest of the early Legions, its numbers bolstered by widespread recruiting during the war for Ancient Terra, the IXth found no place in the hosts arrayed to assault the Jovian moons or the resource-rich inner worlds. Instead, its flag was planted among the artificial moons of baleful Neptune, whose labyrinthine tunnels and dark halls were the lair of xenos raiders and the last debased human colonists of that far-flung outpost. There was little here to be gained but time, precious time for the Emperor to claim the shipyards of Saturn and the allegiance of Mars, for which He needed the raiders and mutants of the outer worlds held in place. To that end, He sent the IXth Legion forth to die.

The Remembrancer

One among the many implants required to transform mortal men into Legionaries, the omophagea was designed by the Emperor to allow His Legions to absorb the memories and skills of their foe by consuming their flesh. It is situated in the spinal cord but is actually part of the brain, consisting of four nerve bundles connecting the spine and the stomach wall. Capable of reading and absorbing genetic material, the omophagea extracts information as a set of memories or experiences that are added to the recipient's own. The overactive nature of this organ within the IXth Legion led to the development of a number of flesh-eating and blood-drinking rituals for which they were known in the Legion's earliest years. The mutations in this implant that characterise the Legion are the most likely cause for the cravings for flesh and blood experienced by many of its recruits, and prior to the mental conditioning and training begun by Sanguinius, these urges took a firm hold on the Legion's character.

The effects of the omophagea allowed for new recruits to be inducted and granted a basic competence with extreme rapidity through the flesh of the newly fallen. This ghoulish practise was commonplace during the earliest years of the Legion's existence, allowing the swift replacement of battlefield casualties. For this reason, the Apothecaries of the IXth Legion were known to carry large stocks of gene-seed into combat zones, ready for the harvest of new souls that followed both glorious victory and ignominious defeat alike.

Twelve thousand warriors of the IXth, all veterans of the wars on Ancient Terra, disappeared on the moons of Neptune. While the Emperor and His grand armies brought Saturn, Mars and the inner worlds to heel, no word of the IXth Legion reached them, either of their success or annihilation. By the time these conquests were completed and the Emperor returned to the cold darkness of the outer system, few expected to find anything other than frozen corpses. Yet when they reached Neptune, it was to find the IXth Legion alive and well; indeed, despite the loss of many of their original complement, the size of the force was almost the same, bolstered by recruits taken from among the dregs of Neptune's barely human population. Where others might have floundered and fallen, the IXth Legion had only grown stronger, rising from the ashes of defeat like a bloody phoenix.

In those bloody days, the Legion was an ever changing beast, its ranks largely formed of line infantry equipped almost exclusively for the brutal madness of close quarters assault. This was a role at which the Legion excelled, always favouring a sudden and overwhelming charge to a long drawn-out battle of attrition. They well understood the role of their macabre legend in war, most often choosing to stage their attacks at dusk or dawn, and taking to decorating the storm-grey of their armour with a variety of charnel images and taking to the field unhelmed, that the sight of their angelic visages streaked with blood might unsettle the enemy. Some companies even began to incorporate the secret bloody rituals of the Legion into their doctrines of battle, tearing apart the enemy on the field of battle or indulging in bloody feasts to break their morale and set panic in their ranks.

Again and again the IXth Legion would be cast into the crucible of destruction, only to emerge each time as hale as they had been before. Each time they took from the enemy what was required to fight on and grasped victory where others had seen only defeat and despair, though it left them changed. On the silent black battlefields of the Kuiper belt and the endless wastes of Rust, the IXth Legion was sent to fight and survive where others could not, to fight the unseen holding actions of the Great Crusade's first faltering steps. Malcador the Sigillite himself was to take note of their exploits and dub them the Revenant Legion, a title that many came to use for the indomitable warriors of the IXth Legion, as much a sign of the superstitious awe in which they were held by many as it was a commendation of their bravery. Indeed, the Sigillite is but one of a number of senior officials within the Divisio Militaris who seemed ill at ease with this incarnation of the Legiones Astartes, lacking as they did the prestige or open popularity of some of their brethren, such as the much vaunted XIIIth Legion or Horus' own XVIth Legion.

The Immortal Ninth

Time and time again the pride of the IXth Legion was to fall on the field of battle, yet the records of their valour make common mention of the same handful of warriors and champions. Some remembrancers and historians have taken this to indicate a long history of redoubtable heroes, even going so far as to compile these records into a number of epic stanzas, forming the separate entries into a single legend. Yet, the true reason for the longevity of certain names within the order of battle for the IXth Legion is far less heroic.

Since its foundation, the IXth Legion had operated in the most extreme battlefield conditions and necessity had forced upon them a number of practises that might otherwise be seen as monstrous. One among these, fostered by the nature of their design and the conditions under which they fought, was the consumption of fallen captains by their followers in order to preserve their hard-won skills and experience. As a mark of honour as well as practicality, it also became accepted that recruits took the names of those whose skills they absorbed, and lieutenants would assume the names of their captains. Such was the resemblance of each member of the IXth to their flawless brothers that most outsiders failed to notice this subtle brand of immortality. The most famous example of which being the figure thought to have served as the IXth Legion's first and only master, other than Sanguinius himself. Known to history as Ishidur Ossuros, this warrior is commonly held to have commanded the IXth from Unity to the discovery of Baal in late M30, yet a closer examination of the records shows that name died numerous times, only to be replaced by another.

Over time and battles past count, this practise became an honoured tradition of the Legion, a visceral ritual that bound the survivors together despite their often disparate origins. Yet as much as it bound those of the IXth Legion to each other, it forced them away from their brethren among the Imperial Army and other Legions. In the years before Sanguinius' return, no few of the other Primarchs expressed a distaste with the practises of the IXth Legion, though they could not dispute their success on the battlefield. Such was the legacy of mistrust and barbarism that the IXth carried with them, one pressed upon them by the brutal necessity of their calling.

A dangerous and unsightly weapon, to be unsheathed only in dire need and then quickly hidden away again, the IXth Legion found themselves often in the company of those Legions less favoured by the bright lords of the newly-forged Imperium. With the savage War Hounds and oft-forgotten IVth, in whom Horus had found his own disposable weapons, they found a bitter kinship, though it was rare to see these Legions gathered together. Yet it was the work of these ingloriously practical and gore-spattered warriors that set the foundations of the Imperium in place, though there are scant songs sung in praise of the deeds the Emperor commanded them to perform in the pursuit of the golden empire which He sought to build.

A Descent into Madness

With each victory, the dire legends that surrounded the IXth Legion grew and spread. They were the spectres that haunted the wild places at the edge of the Great Crusade's advance, the terrors loosed by the Emperor to clear His path across the stars. It was a duty and title they accepted with grim pride, never shirking the mantle that they wore in His name and never baulking from the tasks assigned them. Each campaign was undertaken with a cold fury that stood them apart from the Emperor's other attack dogs and hidden murderers, a quiet, brooding hunger for blood and death that was as terrifying as it was effective. Once committed to battle, the IXth did not relent, did not retreat, and could not be stopped. They fought until the enemy was utterly destroyed and paid no heed to the thought of mercy or the need to build an empire rather than a graveyard.

Few among the mighty and renowned welcomed their presence on the eve of battle, for the stench of death and madness was ever on them. So, lacking a patron among the handful of returned Primarchs to guide them and give purpose to their conflicts, the IXth Legion slipped further into isolation and infamy. It became home to a strange mixture of Imperial doctrine and crimson ritual, its ranks and formations riddled with charnel cults and bloody prophets of war, the superstitions of a hundred worlds given power by the nature of their transformation and left to fester on the worst battlefields of the Great Crusade. Worse, the appearance of these blood-soaked angels, tall and striking, perhaps even more so when caked in the gore of the battlefield, often set those they brought into the Imperium to their worship, lest they anger the red angels that had come. It was a slide towards madness that would see the end of the Legion. For were it not abated, it would become a worse danger to the Imperium than the monsters it was made to hunt.

The seeds of this destruction were already sown, with many watching the Legion and its commanders, already distrustful of the Immortal Ninth and its blood-soaked killers. The IXth Legion's 14th Company was sanctioned by Rogal Dorn for its actions during the Second Siege of Yarant, where the IXth Legion's warriors took to killing and consuming prisoners on the walls of the fortress to demoralise the enemy, as well as to secure intelligence. While the Imperial Army brought grievance against the Legion after reports were filed that mortally wounded soldiers of the Malagant Rifles had been slaughtered and drained by the IXth Legion rather than left to the mercy of the enemy during the retreat from Shedim. Such brutal necessities seemed of little concern to the IXth Legion, but served only to add weight to those who claimed they should share the fate of the other failed Legions.

Broken apart by the dictates of war and the needs of the Great Crusade, the IXth Legion became outcasts among the brotherhood of Legions. Now they fought in small isolated companies, each fostering its own distinct brand of the red cults that had spread across the Legion. They still maintained a force mostly composed of line infantry and jump troops, but less from tactical expediency and more due to the Divisio Militaris' reluctance to supply them with more potent arms and munitions. In the face of this, the Legion turned more and more to its own macabre methods to win battles, prizing victory more highly than the respect of their peers. Bitter pride in what they saw as the jealousy of others sustained them, but also served to drag them further into disrepute.

The IXth Legion stood upon a knife's edge. They were still a necessary, if bloody, piece of the Emperor's plan to conquer the galaxy, yet that conquest would not last forever and eventually the IXth would become more of a burden in the new Golden Age than a blessing. A reckoning approached for the

IXth Legion. They would either be born anew, changed and not lessened as they had been before, or they would be ended and expunged from history. It was at this time that the scout flotilla of the Great Crusade was to discover an otherwise insignificant world of ruins and deserts, a world whose moons also had their own legends of a bloody angel, a world called Baal.

Out of a Broken Paradise

Caught in the tumultuous grasp of the Maelstrom's northern spur, Baal was a world long dead, reduced to ruins and rad-blasted wastes by the long forgotten wars of Old Night. The initial Expeditionary fleets had overlooked it as a target for the Great Crusade, as even though it sat along a major stable warp current, it possessed no real industrial value and only the most tenuous population. Yet it was here in 843.M30 that the Emperor would rediscover one of His lost sons, the Primarch Sanguinius. As with so many of the Primarchs, Sanguinius had brought a bloody peace to his adopted home world, moulding the primitive tribes he had found there in order with his own ideals. His was to be a legacy of conquest tempered with justice and knowledge, a path so very different than that taken by the IXth Legion that would be bequeathed to him.

Having foreseen the Emperor's coming in prescient dreams, Sanguinius bent his knee to his father without qualm or delay, and was to learn the ways of war at the side of Horus himself, accompanying the Primarch and his Luna Wolves, to see how war was waged among the stars and to understand the functions of the vast Imperium that the Emperor was building.

As Sanguinius forged a bond of trust with his mentor and brother, the IXth Legion was summoned to attend upon their new master. Gathered from distant war zones across the galaxy, it took many months for each disparate band of the IXth Legion to be found and recalled. It would be two years and four months before the gathering was complete, and on the storm-wracked world of Teghar, an army of grim killers with the faces of angels assembled, eagerly awaiting a new slaughter of which to partake.

NAME: BAAL

CLASSIFICATION: LEGIONES ASTARTES HOME WORLD [DEATH WORLD, INCLUDES TWO MOONS]

SYSTEM DATA: HN/5/8648//ZOMEGA

STELLAR GRID: 01-HE0S/LS-14

SEGMENTUM: ULTIMA/COREWARD

NOTATION: [ALL PLANETOIDS IN THE BAAL SUB-SYSTEM EXHIBIT AN ABNORMAL LEVEL OF AMBIENT RADIATION, THIS IS NOT A NATURAL PHENOMENON AND IS LIKELY DUE TO THE WARS OF OLD NIGHT] ++[OPERATIONAL BASE OF IXTH LEGION]++ ++[FORGE ENCLAVE OF THE ANVILLUS MECHANICUM PRESENT ON FIRST MOON]++

The Child of the Desert

Few of the young Primarchs, spirited away from the Emperor's side by unknown means, found themselves in conditions that any might describe as fair, and yet among their number Sanguinius was particularly ill-favoured by fortune. He was to come to rest within the distant Baal system, once a thriving hub of Mankind's ancient empires that had since been reduced to a sea of rad-scorched ash and dust by its own folly during Old Night. On the second moon, where Sanguinius was cast adrift, there eked out a fragile remnant of Mankind, a number of warlike tribes that stalked the deserts surviving on the plunder of war and what little could be foraged from the wastes.

His earliest days were spent in the deep desert and of them little is known, for Sanguinius did not speak of them. Doubtless he faced hardships that would have felled men full grown, slew creatures that even the desert tribes avoided and survived where the rad-phage of Old Night would cook the flesh of mortals in minutes. It is not known how long his sojourn in the wastes lasted, but by the time he was discovered by one of the many tribes of Baal Secundus he was a young boy, almost of age by the standards of the tribesmen, and he already bore the wings for which he was renowned. Whether these white wings were born of Baal's influence or the Emperor's design is a secret that only Him on Terra can reveal.

Sanguinius was quick to adapt to his new life, as were all his kind, his strength and resilience quickly earning him a place within the ranks of the tribe that had found him, known, as were all the tribes of Baal, as simply '*The People of the Blood*' or '*The Blood*'. Here he grew to manhood, troubled by dreams and ill portents of death and blood, and the arrival of a grim king from the outer worlds. He fought against the mutated wretches that prowled the deep desert and the raiders of other tribes with the same single-minded focus that he gave to his loyalty to his new people. Yet, unlike his distant kin, there was no long war of Unification undertaken on Baal Secundus, no glorious campaign of conquest to prove the young Primarch's worth.

The legend of the winged warrior had spread far across Baal, a warrior tall, fair and much unlike the stunted and rad-scarred people. Ferocious in war and wise in peace, he seemed to be a vision of past glories come once again to Baal, a promise for the future that had all but been forgotten among The Blood. Despite any denials on the part of the Primarch, he became as a god to his foster people, and warriors from across the wide desert came to fight at his side. Within the span of a few short Baalite years, each an endless scorching summer, a vast host had gathered at the Great Angel's side, to learn from his words and to shelter beneath his wings.

Thus it was that when the Emperor came for His missing son, when starships once again returned to the skies of Baal, it was not to find a king of battle and war but instead an unwilling god. Having long foreseen his father's coming and the many consequences of that meeting, Sanguinius came to meet the Emperor alone, without the long train of his worshippers or the warriors pledged to his service. Alone he fell to his knees before his Father and asked only for the lives of his followers, fearing the wrath of a man who had sworn to topple all religions. Seeing in the winged Primarch a servant of rare talents and keen loyalty, the Emperor granted his wish; His Truth was withheld from Baal and no Imperium ship would set itself down upon the second moon of Baal again, save at the behest of Sanguinius himself. The Blood would continue to live as they always had, kept in part as surety against the Great Angel's pact, and Sanguinius himself departed to begin his service to the Emperor.

The captains of the Revenant Legion, the Great Crusades' blood-soaked angels, gathered as Stormbird transports bearing the mark of the Luna Wolves descended from orbit. From within came a troop of warriors clad in the sea-green of Horus' own Legion, yet the one at their head was not Horus, though by his stature he was a true son of the Emperor and one of His Primarchs. Great white wings unfolded and Sanguinius revealed himself to his sons, his sculpted features the very image of those that thronged about him. Sanguinius beheld the gathered warriors of the IXth, each bearing the scars of unrelenting battle both on their proud faces and in the dark recesses of their spirits. These were not men to be impressed by the pomp and ceremony of his escort, nor by simple strength of arms. The winged Primarch, amid the rain and storms of that far world, took a knee before the rough-cast killers and scarred blood-drinkers and, rather than demand their allegiance, he offered them his own.

The warriors who had offered up everything to the new Imperium and in return been granted only scorn and mistrust, were now offered a Primarch's loyalty, given freely and without reservation. Sanguinius had won their devotion with his actions, and to seal them to him he led the assembled Legion on their first campaign, standing in the front lines of battle where his valour spoke for the sincerity of his pledge. The storm-wracked fifth world of the system, Teghar Pentaurus, was the stage upon which Sanguinius fought for the loyalty of his Legion. There he gave of his blood in the maelstrom of combat and came to understand the true nature of his sons. Sanguinius witnessed the bloodlust and fey hunger that ran through his Legion's core and recognised it as his own darkness. The abhuman hordes of Teghar and their bestial thralls fell before the IXth Legion like wheat before a scythe, Sanguinius himself claiming the pelt of a dire carnodon as a trophy of battle and a symbol of the pact he had formed with his sons. In the gore-spattered aftermath of the campaign, Sanguinius saw one possible future, a crimson future of war eternal where his sons would truly become monsters, the playthings of a dark and terrible fury. Yet, the winged Primarch did not despair.

Even in the heat of battle, there remained in the warriors of the IXth Legion a spark of nobility, the still-warm ashes of their martial pride and determination. They fought to grasp the fickle favour of victory, not simply for slaughter, and held to their own codes of honour with an iron will. These would be his weapons in the battle for the IXth Legion's soul, the tools with which he would raise them up. The winged Primarch knew full well that no future was absolute, no dark fate beyond hope of repair, and with the end of the battle he declared, '*even though a darkness hangs over them, a future soaked in blood and horror, they are angels yet. Angels of Blood*'.

A Legion Reborn

The newly titled Blood Angels did not return en-masse to Baal – that blistering wasteland had little to teach them that the ruins of Terra and a thousand other dead worlds had not. Instead, Sanguinius sought the aid of his brother, Horus, who had been his mentor and friend during his first years as part of the Emperor's grand army. Dividing his Legion, its heraldry now changed both to honour the Primarch and to match the new name they had been granted, he set each company to fight alongside one of Horus' own Luna Wolves companies. At the side of these renowned warriors, the Blood Angels would fight for the next decade, seeing the fall of countless worlds and the prosecution of campaigns of every kind, from the brutal simplicity of wars of extermination to the deadly subtlety of quiet campaigns of strike and fade. In the shadow of the Luna Wolves and the greatest of the Emperor's Primarchs, the once-outcasts of the IXth Legion would gain stature in the eyes of their peers and a newfound sense of decorum.

Each of the campaigns was a new trial, a subtle test selected with keen insight by the two Primarchs to salve the wounds inflicted by time and fate upon the Blood Angels. Sanguinius instilled in his sons a new sense of pride, not in simple carnage and the blood-soaked eternity of melee, but in a future in which they stood as exemplars of the Imperial creed, equal even to Horus' own warriors. In the year-long siege of Anaxis XII, they grasped the value of brotherhood as they stood shoulder to shoulder with the Imperial Fists against a tide of Hrud that seemed without end; on Cambriole and Prehalt they were taught discipline as they matched blades with inscrutable Eldar reavers; while on Kentaurus Beta they learnt something of mercy as Sanguinius led them on the bloodless pacification of the Kentauran colonies. With each battle, the Legion shook off part of the stigma of their past and took their first faltering steps along a new path.

Eager to prove worthy of the oath Sanguinius had made to them, the warriors of the IXth Legion strove to put aside the gore-soaked solitude that had once been the armour of their pride and to embrace the new virtues Sanguinius had shown them. Fury tempered by wisdom, blood-hunger chained with discipline, when the IXth Legion returned once more to Baal, they were no longer that rough beast which had once stalked Terra, but were now a Legion reborn in form more fitting of their angel-winged sire. There, on the sands of Baal, they were met by the newly raised and trained contingents of The Blood, the native people of that rad-scoured system, whom Sanguinius himself had raised up and schooled in the arts of war. The two halves of the Legion were joined, warriors from both spread across the many companies of the Blood Angels that they might strengthen each other and weaken the hold of the IXth Legion's Terran past.

The Foresight

Sometimes gift, sometimes curse, the winged sire of the Blood Angels was among that small number of Primarchs able to glimpse what was to come to pass, a sliver of the talent held by their own father, the Emperor Himself. Through it he saw many things, echoes of dark futures and grim fates that haunted his dreams and drove him to act in ways that oftentimes seemed strange to his brothers. He could not guide his sight, direct it to see where he would, it came to him unreliably and without his will or control. It taunted him with dire premonitions, beset him with doubts over his choices and yet to many it was seen as a gift.

It was a burden borne by the Primarch almost alone, for of his own sons next to none inherited the talent. Of that tiny handful that did, it was little more than a fragment, a tiny scrap of sight. Most well-known among these talents were those who foresaw a single moment of the future with absolute clarity – that of their own death. These warriors were known among the ranks of the Legion as the Foresaken, for they were given to a fatalistic and grim outlook, ever seeking the signs of their final day. Such was the curse of the Foresight, that it brought neither comfort nor answers, only sorrow, pain and doubt.

The hunger remained, a shackled beast that lurked ever ready at the edge of madness, waiting for the chance to be set free once again, but by the faith of their Primarch they had a firm hold of its fetters. The Blood Angels honed their minds and wills, devoting themselves to the study of wisdom as well as war. They became scholars as well as warriors, and under the approving gaze of their winged Primarch, they put aside the barbarism they had once embraced and sought to prove themselves a force worthy of the future for which they fought. As time passed and the Blood Angels' past slipped from the memories of those they fought alongside, the blood hunger became little more than a myth, a half-remembered ghost story of ancient ghouls once bound in service to the Emperor. Those few among the Legion that succumbed once more to its thirst or to the black fury that followed on its heels were quietly concealed, granted the Emperor's peace or sealed away on Baal. The Blood Angels and their Primarch joined the Great Crusade as equals, looked down upon by none and followed the call of war to the stars.

The new crimson-clad Legion was both familiar and yet fundamentally changed in character. It still waged war with a fury to shake the heavens, but now it was leashed to a deep well of discipline and keen intellect. Still they favoured shock assault, a falling upon the foe suddenly and without warning, but now with a Primarch's will at their back they made use of the full panoply of Imperial technology. Now, when the angels came, they fell from the sky like a rain of fire, a thousand burning lights against the dawning sky, the wrath of the Emperor Himself given crimson form. Nor was this the extent of their skills, for though the sudden onslaught was their preference, they knew now full well the value of the feigned retreat, the gun line and a hundred other stratagems besides. They were a Legion fully formed, so much more now than the simple bludgeon they had once been, and this is perhaps the truest evidence of the Emperor's plan for His Legions, that with their Primarchs they became whole – far more than the sum of their genetic legacy and the harsh lessons of Unification.

Icons of an Empire

At the height of the Great Crusade, a thousand times a thousand worlds were brought into the fold of the Imperium, uncounted billions of men-under-arms fought in the name of the Emperor and legends that will endure long past our own short spans. Of those legends it is the Legiones Astartes that stand tallest and shine brightest, each a burning brand of martial excellence that lit the way for the mortal armies that followed on their heels, and of those Legions there were some that captured the spirit of the Great Crusade more than others. Sanguinius' Blood Angels found themselves among that group; the speed of their advance, the spectacle of their assaults and the awe that their appearance inspired all served to make them favoured subjects of the Remembrancers who followed the fleets.

They fought the noblest of campaigns, unleashed upon the foulest of those creatures that hid in the darkness of the void, and were tasked with the liberation of those held under the lash of the alien. They slew monsters and made safe the far flung worlds of humanity, and those whom they liberated saw in them true angels come down from the heavens to their aid. Among their own kin they also found great acclaim, in part for the campaigns fought at their sides in past years, the skill at arms which they displayed on the field and the magnanimous nature of their warriors. Yet, much of their reputation and the good will extended them was to come from the noble mien of the Angel himself, for of all the Primarchs of the Emperor, he was the most beloved and admired.

The sons of the Emperor had often been a fractious brotherhood, with many bearing grudges or perpetuating rivalries among their kin. Among them all, Sanguinius was perhaps the most admired and respected, for he held none of his brothers lesser than himself and met each with an open warmth and goodwill that calmed even the rage of his grim brother Angron. Of them all perhaps only Horus was held in more respect, though the Lord of Cthonia's colder demeanour and more brooding aspect left him more aloof than the winged Primarch. Sanguinius was welcome amongst the courts of worlds without count, from the exotic thrones of far colonies to the baroque nexus chambers of the Mechanicum's distant realms. He embodied the pride and optimism of those golden years, when it seemed that none could stand against the armies of the Emperor and the galaxy was laid bare for their conquest.

Ullanor was to be the proof of that destiny, a grand campaign to shatter the greatest remaining rival of Mankind's dominance – the Orkish empire of Urlakk Urg. Here, Horus would break that foe in the largest battle of the Great Crusade, wining a grand victory, and yet even after that accomplishment at the Triumph that would follow, many expected Sanguinius, who had not been present for the fighting, to receive the laurels of Warmaster. Such was the reputation and glamour of the Great Angel and his warriors, now seen as peerless warriors and scholars both, that few doubted Sanguinius' worthiness to act as the Emperor's proxy, though some succumbed to petty jealousy. This was the apex of glory for the Blood Angels and their sire, a peak they would stand upon for only a short span and from which their fall would crack the very foundation of the Imperium.

Unit Organisation and Structure within the Legion

In all of its incarnations, the IXth Legion has defied the standard by which the Legiones Astartes have been measured. In its earliest days, it operated with such a simple order of battle and command structure that it could barely be called an army, consisting only of massed infantry companies with few specialised troops of any kind. Most often these troops were equipped as 'reaver' squads, close quarters optimised and wielding arms requiring limited resupply, the perfect warriors for operations undertaken at arm's-length from the main force of the Great Crusade. The aberrant quirks of the Legion, the red thirst that haunted its warriors, wreaked havoc on its discipline and made any attempt at large scale organisation difficult. Tactics were often developed and employed at the company or even squad level during combat rather than being part of a larger Legion-wide approach to strategy.

This unique manner of operation, fighting at a distance from other units and with limited oversight by the Divisio Militaris, served to limit the impact of the Legion's more aberrant practises on the morale of allied units. As such there was no concerted effort to bring the Legion into compliance with others of the Imperial Host, and it was a matter of tacit complicity among the various generals and commanders that fought alongside the IXth Legion that it was to be allowed to operate in a manner of its own choosing. Its first commanders were more warlords than true officers, they enforced discipline at the point of a sword, earned respect with the strength of their arms, and they walked the battlefield as visceral forces of nature. When these respected commanders advanced, the warriors of the IXth Legion followed. When they held the line, their followers dug in, and when they laid down their blades, those around them ceased the killing. It was a brutally efficient structure, one that could be impeded only by the infliction of massive casualties, for even if one warlord fell, there were a dozen veterans ready to step forwards and take his place.

This was all to change with the return of Sanguinius. The winged Primarch was to bring a sense of order to the often fractious Legion, stamping a new structure onto it in the hopes of containing its hunger. Though in essence this new order would seem to be in accord with the *Principia Bellicosa*, the schema by which the other Legions were organised, in actuality it also varied a great deal from the standard pattern. It retained the basic structure of companies, initially forming the Legion into 200 companies of approximately 300 warriors each, although by the last years of the Great Crusade this would have increased to 300 companies each of 500 warriors. However, past this basic structure there were many discrepancies, each chosen by the Great Angel to serve a purpose in his plans. These companies were grouped into Hosts for campaigns requiring greater force of numbers than that possessed of a single company, though each Host was a temporary creature broken and made as need required.

Sanguinius created three Spheres to encompass his Hosts, three chambers by which he would give order and purpose to the warriors of the Legion. Each was separate and distinct from the Three Hundred Companies and the strictures of the *Principia Bellicosa*, forming a distinct strata of organisation that allowed the warriors of the IXth Legion to focus their hunger and rage towards a single end and to conquer it. Yet it was not merely a blunt tool, but an elegant and artful plan designed to promote the finer qualities of the Legion while providing an outlet for the more base. It was the Great Angel's masterwork, the fulfilment of an oath and the salvation of his children.

The outermost of the three Spheres would encompass the rank and file of the Legion, the warriors that plied blade and bolter on the battlefield. Known within the Legion as the Malak, these warriors had but one duty – to fight at the order of their captains. They obeyed, they killed and they practised the arts granted them by the Primarch, and by these simple disciplines and the endless focus of their post-human minds they staved off the depredations of their hunger. Within this sphere there were but few distinctions, simple titles and orders for those who excelled in specific arts of war and peace, exemplars of their tasks and angels of small actions. These were the marksmen, poets and duellists of the Legion, its strong right hand and beating heart, and though these were but small honours, they were held dear by those who won them.

The Second Sphere was composed of the commanders and leaders of the Legion, the powers and dominions that stood at the side of Sanguinius. To them fell the duty of command, of the execution of Sanguinius' wishes with alacrity and sound judgement. Unlike those who fought at their command, they bore the burden of free will, of time to think and ponder as they would while the curse stalked them. They were the planners and strategists of the crimson host, they directed battles and wars as lesser men directed symphonies, utilising each instrument at their command to its utmost. As the rank and file found peace in their studies, so too did each of the mighty become

The Immortal Warlord

The first and last warlord of the IXth Legion, other than Sanguinius himself, was a warrior who fought under the name of Ishidur Ossuros. His is a legend that spans nearly 80 years of war, fighting in battles from the rad-wastes of Ancient Terra to the rocky heights of Saiph, a legend of blood and death that charts a course across the most hazardous battlefields of the Great Crusade. He was the hero of the assault on Kum-karta in Yndonesia, where he reaped such a toll of lives that his warriors emerged from the fortresses' sunken vaults painted crimson head to foot, and the champion of the Ghost Wars on Saiph. If the records of the Divisio Militaris are to be believed then Ishidur fought in 317 separate major engagements – and yet these same records also show his death on at least four verified occasions.

Given the nature of the IXth Legion in those blood-soaked years before Sanguinius' return, and those few oral records from the warriors of the Legion itself, it is likely that the true Ishidur Ossuros fell in battle in 802.M30. His lieutenants then took his memories and his name, by means of that singular mutation of the IXth Legion, and continued his legacy for the sake of the Legion. Each time Ishidur Ossuros fell, he would rise again like some gore-soaked phoenix, to once more take the reins of the IXth Legion. The last known reference to this warrior is during the Battle for Teghar Pentaurus, there the enemy's last gasp was a ferocious assault that threatened to overrun the Primarch and his guard. It was the final Ishidur and his warriors who would save the Great Angel, staging a suicidal counter-assault into the teeth of the foe and holding them at bay for almost an hour as reinforcements rushed to Sanguinius' aid. Ishidur Ossuros perished one final time, his body never recovered, exchanging his long life for that of the Primarch in whom he had entrusted the future of the IXth Legion.

a master of many disciplines, those of the pen and brush as well as those of the blade and gun. Though they were not the single-minded fanatics of Legions such as Angron's red reapers or Guilliman's famed tacticians, there were few who could match them in the arts of war taken as a whole.

The First Sphere, the final demarcation of Sanguinius' new Legion, comprised the ranks of the Immortals. These warriors stood within the presence of the Primarch; they did not operate within one of the Three Hundred Companies but as the guards and servants of the Great Angel himself. Each, when inducted into the ranks of the First Sphere, gave up his common name to take on another and gave up his identity to do the work of the Primarch without guilt or regret. They were Sanguinius' wrath, his stern resolve and his watchful eyes each given form and purpose. Upon these warriors he depended for the most dangerous of tasks, to fight upon those battlefields and to act upon those errands that would tarnish the soul and bring the hunger roaring to the fore. By the armour of the names and persona that the warriors of the First Sphere wore like their own, they put off the toll of their actions and emerged from their service untarnished, to take their places in the ranks once again.

Orders of the First Sphere

The First Sphere was made up entirely of a series of warrior Orders, each of which operated independently of the Three Hundred Companies. The first and most famous of these were the Sanguinary Guard, the lifeguard of the Primarch himself, but there would be many others – each assigned with a specific task and duty. Few outside of the Legion have made a complete accounting of these Orders, but listed here are the most well-known and important of the warrior Orders of the First Sphere:

The Sanguinary Guard – Also known as the Ikisat, or the Burning Ones, for their ardour and unwavering devotion, each individual warrior bore the title Seraph, and was tasked with the safety of the Primarch's person. On rare occasions, they were also assigned as guards for other commanders as a sign of the Great Angel's favour.

The Crimson Paladins – Also known as the Keruvim, or the Storm Winds, for the sudden onset of their anger and the lasting fervour of their hate. They served as the guardians of the Primarch's halls and sanctums. At the Primarch's order, they also took to the field to serve as his determination and the shield of his will.

The Burning Eyes – Also known as the Ofanim, and the Many-eyed, these secretive warriors were the Angel's Shame, his secret police and shadow agents. They watched the Legion for signs of treachery and madness, and acted to assuage his guilt by removing the stain. Rarely seen on the battlefield, the Ofanim fought alone and with weapons considered unworthy of true warriors.

The Angel's Tears – Also known as the Broken Blade, or Dead Hand, for the cruel devastation they brought to the foe, each individual warrior bore the title Erelim, and served as Sanguinius' wrath set forth by his will to scour away those he decreed unworthy of being saved. They were the most commonly seen of the Orders, serving the role other Legions would refer to as Destroyers.

Legion Command Hierarchy

The lords of Sanguinius' crimson hosts bore many similarities to the strictures of the *Principia Bellicosa*, but with a number of differences both large and small. Authority was strictly divided across the three Spheres of the Legion, with each officer operating within his own place in the manner given him by the Primarch himself. This strict, overlapping system of authority was less flexible than some Legions, but it afforded a solid line of responsibility and control that limited the effect of the Blood Angels' ever-present hunger and sudden rage. To mitigate the possibility of any breakdown of authority, the Blood Angels maintained a large number of junior officers, lieutenants and sergeants of varying types, all quickly able to take the place of the slain in the heat of battle.

On the field of battle, the line of authority was always drawn clearly for the Blood Angels and followed absolutely. To disobey or question orders was a grave sin, undertaken only in the most serious of situations and warranting the harshest of punishments, even if proven correct. Their duty was only to obey, the individual warrior worried not for anything but action, putting the hunger to the back of his mind while those appointed over him worried over consequences. In the Blood Angels, all authority stemmed directly from Sanguinius and flowed down from him, first to the lord commanders then to his captains and beyond in an unbroken and inviolable line. This fact kept his Legion centred and focused, each word from a sergeant in the heat of battle was the word of Sanguinius himself, each nod from a captain a tilt of the Primarch's head itself.

The Blood Angels also differed in small ways, as with many of the Legions they had their own titles and names for authority and a host of lesser divisions to suit their style. Those who held command over Hosts and had authority over lesser captains were known as Archeins rather than the old title of Praetor, and also held the title of Dominion for a company. Within a company were a number of junior officers, the Powers who commanded the ranks of the company at war and the Virtues who stood as its exemplars in other endeavours. Many were known by the focus of their devotion, Archeins of Wisdom and Powers of the Blade, such distinctions a mark of respect as much as a tactical designation in a Legion whose Primarch urged them to be more than simple weapons.

War Disposition

By the last years of the Great Crusade, the Blood Angels were among, if not, the pre-eminent Legion of the Imperial Host. The years since Sanguinius had taken charge of the Legion had seen its revitalisation, a change so complete that few now even remembered the Revenant Legion of old. Once the half-forgotten rearguard of the Great Crusade, now it stood at the forefront of every advance, and those who had once scorned it now sang its praises in every court of the Emperor's far-flung domain. It was a fearsome fighting force, a breaker of empires and an ender of worlds, and unshakeable in its loyalty to the Emperor. It was the strong foundation upon which the Imperium was being built, and while it still stood, that empire would not fall.

At any time, the Legion numbered near 120,000 warriors, accounting for casualties, made up of to 300 individual companies, one of the largest Legions in operation at that time, with perhaps only the vast throngs of the Ultramarines and Iron Warriors on record as overmatching this strength. Each of these Hosts comprised a force predisposed towards assault and orbital drop operations, with a large proportion of its infantry equipped for close quarters combat, and its vehicles primarily rigged for high speed strikes and breakthrough operations. With few defensive assets in comparison to more rounded Legions, they would be at a disadvantage if committed to a large scale conflict without operational initiative, but with the Great Crusade at its apex, such a situation seemed at the time unthinkable. This force was spread across the galaxy in a number of separate Hosts, each engaged in large scale operations, as well as custodial forces at each of the Legion's main bases and redoubts – these being at Baal, Saiph and Canopus.

Of these bases, Baal was the largest, for while the second moon remained sacrosanct for the native Blood, the empty rad-scoured world beneath was transformed by the Mechanicum of Anvillus at the invitation of Sanguinius himself. There, where no unmodified person could tread, the tech-adepts built a manufacturing site the envy of many smaller Forge Worlds, supplying much of the munitions and technical needs of the IXth Legion. Baal, as the home world of Sanguinius, warranted a large standing guard, a duty mainly fulfilled by the Crimson Paladins, though at least one company could normally be found at refit. Canopus also served as a manufacturing centre, though of lesser size and sophistication, producing vast quantities of shells and other simple munitions to feed the hungry cannon of the Legion. It was a common stopping point for troops bound outwards for the Great Crusade's frontlines, and many units were to be found at rest there. Saiph was the smallest of the Legion's permanent outposts, serving only as a source of recruits from among the world's endlessly warring tribes, and warranted but a single squad as custodians.

The Legion's fleet assets were similarly impressive, boasting over 300 capital class ships, many of them heavy cruisers or even battleships of various classes. Many of these craft were outfitted to serve as orbital assault craft, mounting either banks of heavy linear cannon for use as bombardment weapons, launch rails for swarms of drop pods or vast hangar bays from which the large Stormbird or Thunderhawk dropships could operate.

Few among their brother Legions could match such a fleet for sheer firepower or mass, for the weakness of the Blood Angels fleet lay in its single-minded obsession with a single stratagem. In terms of support craft, the fleet was less amply supplied, with less than 600 sub-capital craft, mostly slower escort gunboats with little in the way of fast strike craft. This was another side effect of the Legion's singular focus, for such craft were rarely needed for their preferred strategy and speciality, save as screening assets for the larger cruisers.

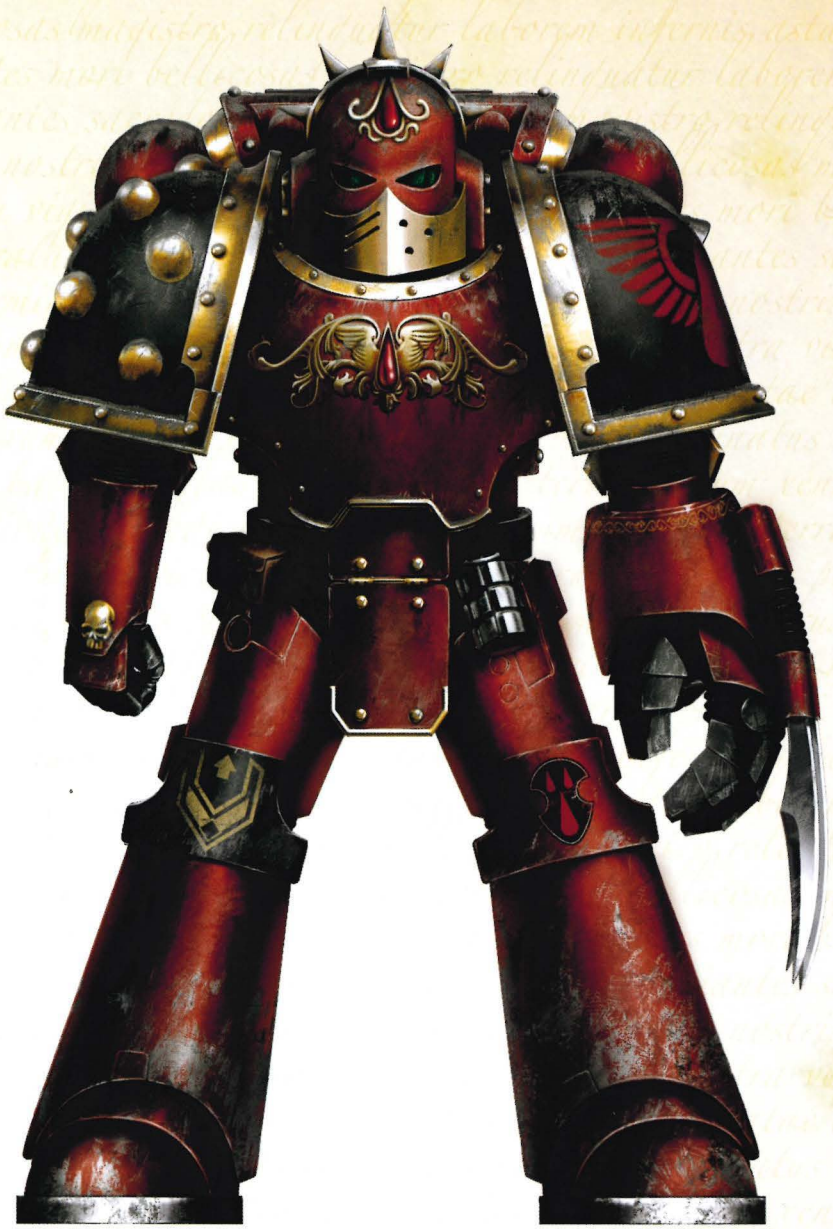
In all, the Blood Angels constituted one of the greatest threats to Horus' nascent rebellion, they were easily a match for any Traitor Legion he cared to stand against them and their loyalty to the Emperor was unquestionable. Openly confronted, they would savage his forces and leave him ill-prepared for an assault on Terra, but left unopposed there could be no attack on Terra without the Blood Angels striking his exposed flanks. Some among his confederates urged the IXth Legion be destroyed in detail, its separate Hosts attacked while on-campaign and annihilated one at a time while they were vulnerable. Mortarion favoured this approach, for he of all the brothers had the least love for the winged Primarch and his witch-dreams. Yet Lorgar convinced his Warmaster that there was another way, a way to not only remove an obstacle but to gain an asset. A trap had been prepared and the Lord of the Word Bearers spoke to the Warmaster of Signus and a mark of blood.

IXTH LEGION VETERAN LEGIONARY

LEGIONARY ARVEN SCURN, 14TH SHOCK ASSAULT DETACHMENT, 32ND MERCIAN RIFT GENE-CULL

Taken into the early IXth Legion from the blasted pits of the Mercian Rift in Old Alba, Legionary Scurn was transfigured, raised up from the foul slums of his birth to stand as a model of perfection among the armies of the Emperor. His outward appearance was that of angelic perfection, but within lurked a red-handed killer devoid of the noble aspect of their as-yet undiscovered sire. These frenzied butchers with the faces of angels were the shock troops of the Wars of Unity within the Sol system, unleashed to kill and burn in indiscriminate fury on the worst of battlefields. Legionary Scurn bears the Pentagram of Vesper, the battle honour of the bloody wars waged on Venus, on his left greave signifying his participation in the worst massacres of the Wars of Unity, as well as a variety of acid-etched markings of a more informal nature. The bloody smears that adorn many Legionaries of the IXth in these early years are intentional marks from the various bloodletting rituals adopted by the so-called Revenant Legion, rather than the residue of battle.

Legionary Scurn was among the few survivors of the original Legion at the time of the Signus muster, relegated along with many relics of those bloody years to lesser companies. He now held the title of Centurion and bearer of the Word of Wrath within the 94th Company, and was among those martyred within the twisted eaves of the Daemonic forest on Signus Prime, exacting a high price from the foe in exchange for his life. In death, he and his brothers would stand higher in the regard of the Great Angel than they ever had in life.



Blood Angels Veteran Sergeant

Sergeant Leonis Harum, Harum Veteran Tactical Squad, 202nd Company, The Crimson Aegis

Shown in this pict-image is Harum, a veteran sergeant of the 202nd Company, in full battle plate and bearing a number of honour markings. Of particular note are the embossed fold icons attached to his chest-plate and helm, both of which indicate separate citations for bravery from an Archein of the IXth Legion. The studded right pauldron is likely a battlefield replacement rather than a standard piece of heraldry, and its inclusion has displaced the rank and company insignia to the greaves of the sergeant's armour.

One of the few to live through the wrecking of the *Ifrit Nine*, Sergeant Harum fell upon the battlefield of Signus Prime following the heavy cruiser's survivors' valiant defence of Legion armoured assets on the far flank – he and his battle-brothers were all recognised as heroes and martyrs of the Legion. It is said that the 202nd were one of the few units to resist the worst excesses of the rage that took hold of the Legion, steeling their spirits against the flaw in their gene-seed with the *Liturgy of the Blood* and holding fast to their duty till death took them.

Blood Angels Leviathan Dreadnought

Venerable-Exemplar Jophial, Keruvim Convocation of Ancients

Venerable Jophial was aboard the *Red Tear*, still engaged with enemy forces in the outer compartments, when that venerable warship smashed itself into the surface of Signus Prime. It is a testament to the formidable armour of his Dreadnought chassis that he survived the impact of the crash landing, and a tribute to his valour that he was among the first of the survivors to dig himself free and secure the area around the wreck. After serving a vital role in recovery operations, the indomitable Ancient would go on to serve as a linchpin in the defence of the wreck.

Blood Angels Heraldry

Blood Angel Legion Banners

Two examples of company banners of the IXth Legion, both carried to war in the Signus campaign. These show the highly decorative style favoured by the Primarch Sanguinius, a testament to the artistic values and scholarly pursuits Sanguinius encouraged among his Legion.

This MkIII pauldron displays the standard Legio Tactical markings, of note are the additional decorative details, an affectation encouraged by Sanguinius.

This ceremonial MkIII pauldron shows the honour marks of a Veteran assault Sergeant, including ornamental details common to the IXth Legion.

A rare example of the heraldry of the First Sphere Order known as the Ofanim, an organisation charged with the internal security of the IXth Legion.

Heavily ornamented Apothecary heraldry. Such lavish decoration was a common factor of later Blood Angels' heraldic patterns.

Artificer plate bearing the insignia of the Sanguinary Guard, the First Sphere Order sometimes known as the Seraphim.

An unusual example of the heraldry of the Keruvim, the Crimson Paladins, shown on a MkIII pauldron. Likely for ceremonial use rather than actual battle-plate.

MkIV pauldron bearing honour markings that show a blood-filled chalice, a common device within the IXth Legion that dates back to some of the Legion's original battle rites.

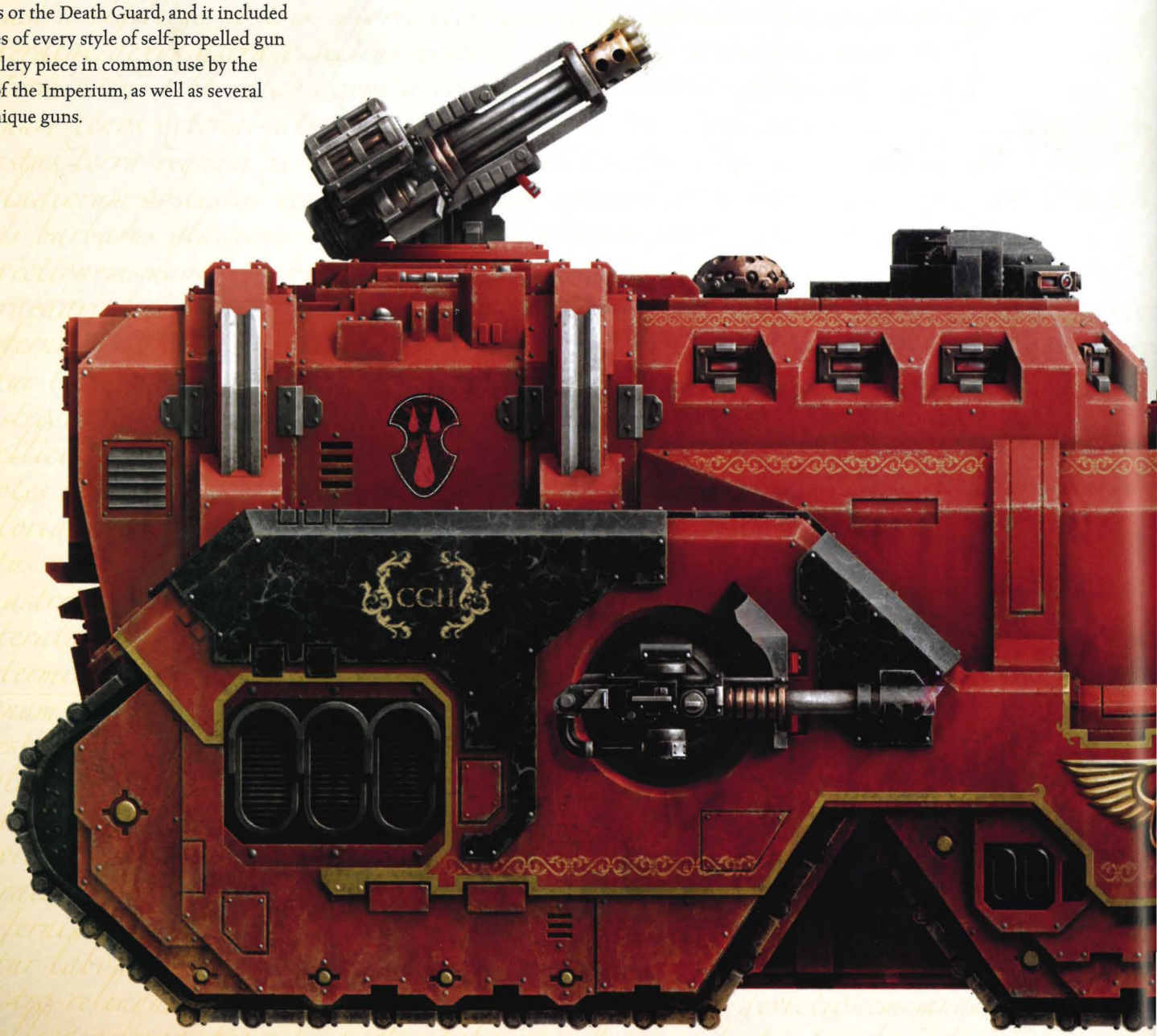
Lavishly decorated Legion insignia, this example is from the battle-plate of Archein Nakir of the 24th Company – a noted warrior and favourite of the Primarch.

Sector Gamma-010

On the far right flank of the Blood Angels advance during the battle at Signus Prime is where Sanguinius is thought to have gathered his artillery, those of his cannon and foot-borne heavy weapons that could not keep pace with the main advance. Massing enough firepower to obliterate any force of arms caught in the open, or to crack and splinter the walls of even the grandest fortresses, for though the Blood Angels were most famous for their audacious drop assaults, they were not unfamiliar with the brutal application of overwhelming firepower. As with any of the Legions, the IXth kept an artillery train of substantial size, though it could not match that of the more specialised Legions, such as the Iron Warriors or the Death Guard, and it included examples of every style of self-propelled gun and artillery piece in common use by the armies of the Imperium, as well as several more unique guns.

Such vehicles could not operate alone, requiring vast quantities of ammunition, fuel and other supplies in order to function at full combat efficiency. Worse, they proved easily vulnerable to close range assault by the enemy and standard Divisio Militaris doctrine demanded a force of screening infantry for such units. As such they went to war in the company of a small army of conveyors and ammunition-barques, and proceeded by a dedicated force of skirmishers and scouts. At the battle for Signus Prime, there were Rhino armoured transports in number to match the heavier artillery vehicles as well as a number of Mastodon and Stegodon super-heavy transports.

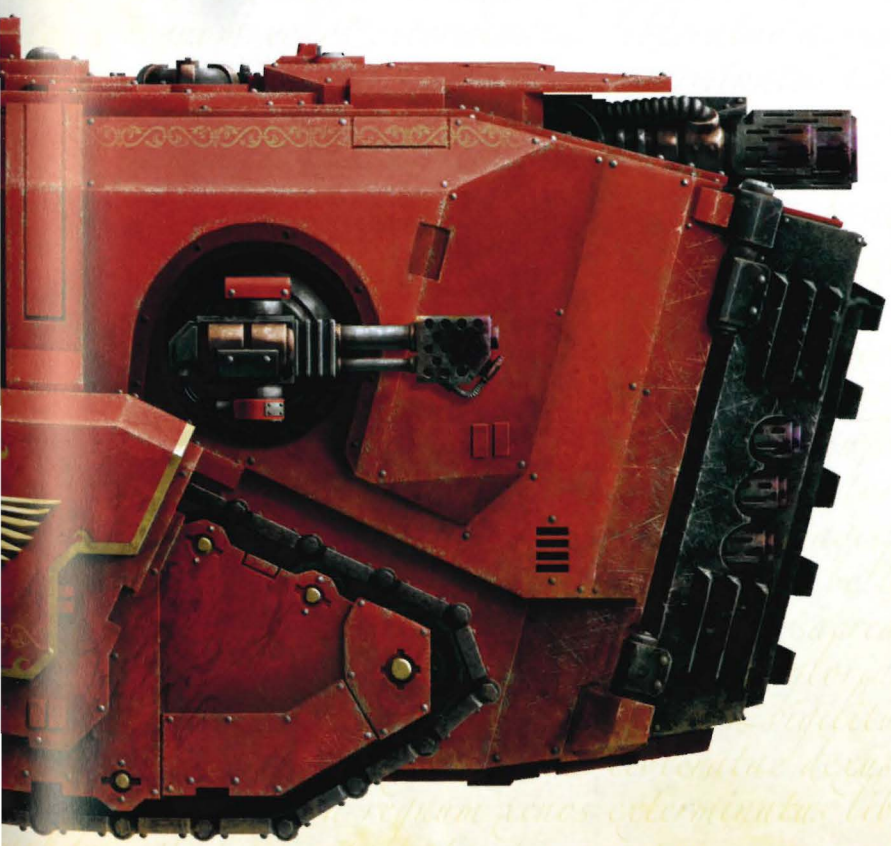
In Sector Gamma-010 of the battlefield on Signus Prime, all of these vehicles, both the artillery and its support, were thrown into a crucible for which they had not been designed. The ability of their foe to appear at point-blank ranges left them at a severe disadvantage; indeed many of the largest cannon were overrun and destroyed before they could fire even a single shot. Here the escorts and close support guns stood at the fore, seeding a co-ordinated pattern of close range blasts and synchronised small arms volleys that held the foe at bay for a time. Had it not been for the near-inexhaustible numbers of the enemy that fell upon them, the outcome of the battle might well have been far different.



Blood Angels Rhino Armoured Carrier

Rho-Argent /12

The twelfth vehicle attached to the 146th Company, assigned to transport one of the many Heavy Support units of the 146th. This vehicle was part of the artillery train on the right flank, but would later be abandoned during the advance after damage inflicted by a monstrous hulk of flesh and bone left the disembarkation ports jammed shut. It would be recovered and repaired after the battle was concluded, the damage analysed to aid in formulating counter-measures for any future encounters of this kind.



Blood Angels Mastodon Heavy Assault Transport

Crimson Fury

Assigned to the 202nd Company and embarked upon the cruiser *Ifrit Nine* when it broke up in low orbit. Even as the cruiser began to come apart, caught in the gravity well of Signus Prime, the Techmarines of the 202nd worked to preserve the vehicles they knew would be sorely needed on the surface, sacrificing their lives to encase them in ablative drop capsules. *Crimson Fury* was one of almost a dozen heavy tanks to survive the drop, and served as Archein Jannus' command vehicle during the long march that led to the battlefield. Of note in this after-action pict is the heavy damage to the vehicle's fore, where daemonic claws proved a match for even hardened ceramite composite intended to repel heavy cannon and melta weaponry.

Exemplary Battles

The history of the Blood Angels is the history of two very different Legions; one of red-fisted warlords, terrors and scourges feared by allies as well as foes, and the other golden-haloed heroes, icons for a new age and warrior-scholars. No one battle can tell the story of two such different Legions, no single tale encompasses the dual heritage of Sanguinius' sons, and it is this dual heritage that has shaped the Legion and made it into that which stood upon a bloody crossroads at the outset of the Horus Heresy. So, we must consider both of the faces of the IXth Legion, that which is foul as well as that which is fair if we are to properly understand the crimson-clad sons of Sanguinius.

The Charnel Feast

In the early years of the Great Crusade, as the fleets of the Emperor first pushed beyond the boundaries of what is now known as the Segmentum Solar and into wild space, His armies would encounter battlefields to shake the sanity of mortal man. Of these fel and terrible places, termed '*zones mortalis*' in the formal cant of the Divisio Militaris, few were more loathsome than the world known to history as Kiy-buran. The first expeditions to Kiy-buran were to vanish without a trace, four full regiments of the Veradan Regulars swallowed up and gone, and a flank of the Great Crusade's galaxy-wide advance left open. In response, the Emperor unleashed His own terrors to seek out whatever beasts might lurk there.

Running ahead of the Expeditionary fleets of the Great Crusade in aid of the Veradan Regulars, three companies of the IXth Legiones Astartes were dispatched to Kiy-buran. The world was a wasteland of irradiated sands inhabited by chattel tribes of degenerate mutants and ruled by a techno-barbarian warlord, Ek'Lobia. These tribes were both bodies to be spent in conflict and the primary foodstuff of Kiy-buran's inhabitants; each sustained by a vicious economy of ritual acts of bloodshed and cannibalism. It was these mutants which had been encountered by the beleaguered ranks of the Imperial Army stranded on the planet. Hordes of barely human mutants armed with little more than primitive clubs and picks had decimated their ranks, the corpses of the fallen hauled back to flickering fire-pits to be cooked by night. For three months, the serried trenches of the Imperial Army repelled the mindless onslaught before the storm-grey Drop Pods of the IXth Legion fell from the sky, wreathed in black smoke.

Crashing to the ground, the Revenant Legion broke through the mutant throng with contemptuous ease and relieved the embattled Veradan troopers. The IXth attacked the cantonments of local tribes, their superior arms and armour allowing them to seize control of the northern mountain ranges, casting out the indigenous mutants they came across with uncompromising brutality. In the opening stage of the IXth Legion's war on Kiy-Buran, they came upon little organised resistance, freely conquering territory, and for months the IXth Legion ravaged Kiy-Buran before news reached the warlord Ek'Lobia, who swore an oath to eradicate the invaders.

Under his command was an army of mutant chattel whose numbers were beyond count and over which he held a power of such terror that they would throw themselves to their death rather than face the freakish horrors which his enslaved sorcerers might unleash. As the IXth Legion crossed into Ek'Lobia's territories, the resistance they met from indigene forces increased until the IXth were drawn into full scale battle. Initially, they easily quashed any bands of savages making strikes against the edges of their line, but quickly these became an unending deluge of bodies which threatened to overwhelm and encircle the remains of the three companies. The IXth girded themselves to repel the tide of mutants, whose hideous deformities made them capable of rending ceramite with their tortured flesh and whose numbers set the earth atremble at their

approach. Though the Legiones Astartes fought doggedly, killing scores of enemy for each battle-brother lost, the sheer numbers of the foe began to force them back. Attempting to regroup, the three companies of the IXth Legion formed a spearhead in an attempt to break through the mutants and reach the distant banner poles that signified the position of the horde's brute commander.

As the tip of the Legion formation threatened to reach the encampment of Ek'Lobia, the horrors of Old Night were unleashed. Reality rippled and tore as the Cracked Skull's ensorcelled chattel brought forth horrors beyond description, reaping a hideous toll of casualties amongst the Legiones Astartes and mutant horde indiscriminately, turning the tide of the battle. Incapable of combating such a threat, the IXth Legion warriors were forced to quit the field of battle or be utterly destroyed, a choice that might have doomed other more honour-bound Legions, but not the pragmatic IXth Legion of old. The Legionaries turned and hacked a red path through the throng with toothless chainswords, broken blades and the cracked pieces of their own fallen comrades' armour.

The strength of almost two companies was lost in that monumental battle, and those Legionaries who escaped were forced to question how they could survive and endure without reinforcement or resupply. The staggering degree of losses suffered created the need to reorganise Legion resources among little more than 380 remaining Legionaries, speaking to the utilitarian and consequentialist nature of the psyche of the early IXth Legion. Foremost among these assets, their Apothecarion was reformed and grown into a combat-support formation; the survival of the remaining Legionaries as well as propagating gene-seed considered paramount to their ability to continue to pursue conquest. Reformed in the crucible of war, far from the path of the Great Crusade, those orphaned companies of the IXth Legion recommenced their campaign at a more considered pace; making squad-based shock assaults against enemy encampments before withdrawing to avoid organised reprisals. The campaign soon stagnated into a pattern of thrust and counter-thrust, a war fought on the back foot to bleed the foe whilst hugely outnumbered.

This war, which became known as the Banquet of Kiy-Buran, continued unbroken for 12 years, all but forgotten by the wider Imperium. The IXth Legion, piece by piece, breaking the tribes of the world in bloody close quarters actions, refused to be drawn into a full scale engagement. In the early years of this conflict, accepting the desperation of their predicament and bereft of resupply, the IXth Legion were forced to take practical measures to survive. Raids against local mutant tribes on the northern continent became matters of domination, not destruction. Those creatures which could be of use were press-ganged into the service of the Legion. Testament to the hardiness of the IXth Legion's gene-seed, even these irradiated and hideously mutated beings were considered suitable candidates for the Legion, their children bred to be little more than meat-stock for their techno-barbarian overlord ascended into angelic perfection by the implantation of Sanguinius' gene-seed. Furthermore, the Legion's Apothecaries encouraged them to join their foe in cannibalism of the war-dead for sustenance, benefitting the Legion and denying the foe in equal measure. These practices allowed the IXth to replenish itself and continue without contact with the wider Imperium greatly beyond the capability of any other Legion.

Undertaking this strategy, the Legion steadily took ground from Ek'Lobia, diminishing both his armies and food supply in the process, while taking that material into themselves with which to rebuild the strength of the Legion. Perhaps the Legion went too far in the name of survival, however. A diary later recovered from the equipment of a missing officer of the Veradan Regulars refers to the IXth as the *'Charnel Feast'*, a cognomen which, when later disseminated, became popular amongst the rank and file soldiery of the Great Crusade before it was quashed by the coming of Sanguinius. The same diary hints at a dark end for the 46th Veradan: as they became unable to continue to prosecute the war, the diary suggests they were also rendered to feed the Legion, whether through literal consumption or to allow the charnel priests, what had become of their Apothecarion, to use their flesh as part of the process of creating new warriors. Other recovered journals claim that the populace of Kiy-Buran came to see the Legionaries as the devils of their myths, stealing their children and feasting upon corpses in a manner more barbaric even than the ritual cannibalism of their masters. It states that the native population feared that their own magicks had unleashed the *'Imperium of Mankind'*, speaking of it in hushed tones as the force of their own undoing.

In the twelfth year after planetfall, the final confrontation of the campaign was all but a foregone conclusion. Ek'Lobia, suffering from years of starvation and surrounded in his fortress spaceport by a replenished force of almost 1,000 Legionaries and their own degenerate serfs, attempted once more to unleash his slave-sorcerers. The massed, unarmoured novitiates of the Legion, recruited from among the tribes of Kiy-buran, suffered the brunt of the attack, while the Legion's off-world veterans made directed strikes against the warlocks, the sheer numbers brought to bear by the IXth overcoming the warlord's feeble defences. His sorcerers dead and his fortress in ruin, Ek'Lobia attempted to flee in a primitive spacecraft, rising from the surface in a cascade of scrap and broken corpses, only to meet a squadron of Imperium cruisers bearing the heraldry of the VIIth Legion in orbit, his life ended under their guns. The Imperium had finally come to reclaim its warriors, expecting to find a world brought to Compliance and ready to accept the Emperor's law.

At the head of the fleet, Rogal Dorn, but newly reunited with his own Imperial Fists, arrived in Kiy-Buran to instead discover a world in a ruin of the Imperium's making. Upon receiving the report of the IXth Legion he was wrathful, as he refused to accept the Compliance of Kiy-Buran as the Dream of Imperium his Father had described to him. In the Charnel Feast Dorn saw monstrous misdeeds, but also the resourcefulness of desperately capable warriors. Reprimanding the surviving IXth Legion warriors for their questionable judgement, the Praetorian ordered the city of Buran razed and burned, the sins of the IXth Legion erased before a single Remembrancer set foot there.

The Burning of Anahktor

Anahktor is a system no longer listed on any Imperium map. It features in no record of conquest nor on any battle honour or in any Divisio Militaris archive. Only in the Great Library of Terra, hidden deep beneath the Imperial Palace and among the ranks of the Blood Angels themselves can the story of this long forsaken battlefield be found. It is a cautionary tale among the ranks of that crimson-clad brotherhood, a tale of an angel's rage and a Legion's shame. It shows, perhaps, that the two Legions, the old IXth and the Blood Angels, are not as far apart as history would have us believe.

Once to be found in the area of space travelled by the Expeditionary fleets, but a short sojourn through the Warp past proud Anvillus itself, Anahktor of old was a small haven of Mankind that had weathered the storm of Old Night. It had done so by being ready to sacrifice what it must and take what it could, its small but effective void navy making a wasteland of neighbouring systems in order to provide for its people, surviving on plunder and slaves. Indeed, so efficacious was this strategy that by the time the first of the Imperium's scout ships arrived on its borders, Anahktor was not only surviving but thriving. So secure did it feel in its small glory and petty strength that those first Imperium scout ships were met with fire and thunder.

The first of the Imperium's fleet to receive word of this attack was a Host of the Blood Angels, Sanguinius at its head and 12 companies of his sons standing ready. Already engaged in an augur sweep of the nearby sectors, Sanguinius ordered their course diverted to Anahktor and the fleet arrayed in attack formation. They broke aether with gunports open and cannon primed, and in a short, brutal engagement broke the enemy fleet waiting for them, the marauder craft of Anahktor proving little match for the brute battleships of the Blood Angels. Within short order, the IXth Legion had pushed on to the first inhabited body in the system, throwing a cordon of iron around it and lighting the sky with the immense firepower of their cannon.

A small airless orb, the inhabitants of Anahktor Extremis were limited to a garrison of Anahktoran soldiers, waiting in sub-surface habitats whose presence was betrayed only by the guns that bracketed the sky above them. Uninhibited by any civilian presence, Sanguinius ordered an immediate assault, eager to deny the enemy time to regroup and recover its momentum, committing the 19th, 67th, 171st and 94th Companies to the attack. Preceded by a brief, but highly accurate bombardment that cracked the surface and shattered the guns of the Anahktoran defenders, a path was opened for the Drop Pods and assault craft that followed on its heels. Brutal close quarter combat enveloped the cold sub-surface halls of Anahktor Extremis as the Blood Angels carved a red path through them. The enemy they fought was so heavily augmented as to be barely recognisable as human, and were dubbed the '*Iron Bulls*' by the Imperium's troops for the sensory horns grafted to their skulls, though among their own people they were the Kusarikku. Wielding primitive plasma casters and grav-lances, the Iron Bulls held against the forces of the IXth Legion for six hours, holding each intersection of the labyrinthine tunnels with tenacious courage and consummate skill.

All across the desolate outer worlds, the same story was written in fire and blood. The Blood Angels harried and beset the enemy, who resisted with great valour, fighting to the bitter end on every outpost and imposing upon the IXth Legion a high cost for each world that fell. Amid the asteroid fortresses of the belt that encircled the outer system, the Iron Bulls staged ambushes and feigned retreats, drawing the Legionaries of the IXth Legion towards craters rigged with blasting charges, sacrificing their own lives to stymie the Legion's advance. On Anahktor Median, the gateway to the inner system, they drew a line with their own bodies, fighting a sprawling battle across 80 kilometres of shallow acidic sea and rocky archipelagos, riding great multi-legged augmetic frames like mounts into battle and stalling the advance of nine companies of the Blood Angels. The warriors of the IXth Legion came to admire the courage of the foe, and took great pride in the victories won against them.

Sanguinius himself gave the order for a six-hour ceasefire in honour of the foe's valour and sacrifice, for though the Anahktorans refused all attempts at direct communication, he wished to offer a salute to the warriors who had fought so well. Privately, the winged Primarch lamented the need for their destruction and hoped that the pause, his ships arrayed in space just short of the system's throneworld, would convince the Anahktoran leadership to bow before the Emperor and wed their strength to that of the Imperium. However, what came next was to shatter any such hope and kindle the wrath of the Great Angel in its full and terrible glory. Advancing under a flag of truce, several Anahktoran craft approached the *Red Tear*, each a wallowing transport barge signalling in the obtuse language of Anahktor that they bore gifts for the Primarch, scans revealing no targeting or aberrant energy readings until the moment the first barge erupted in flame. One hundred and thirty-two Blood Angels died in the explosion that ripped through the fleet, doubling at a stroke the number of casualties the Legion had sustained in the campaign.

Three cruisers sustained significant damage, and one, the *Inculcator*, was gutted and left aflame from stem to stern, damaged so severely that it would later be abandoned. His trust betrayed and many of his sons dead as a result of the low treachery of his foe, Sanguinius let slip the collar of discipline and called for a Day of Revelation, a reckoning for Anahktor and a redress of the wrongs done to his Legion. The people of Anahktor had proven themselves unworthy of a place within the Imperium and unworthy of the Great Angel's respect or mercy.

Surging forwards, the Blood Angels vessels blasted a bloody path through the inner system, annihilating those few squadrons of Anahktor's defence fleet that remained and rained nucleonic fire onto every isolated outpost, leaving only ashes and fields of glass. The Anahktor responded in desperation, shielding military targets with civilian populations, launching suicide runs with more fire-ships and attempting further ambushes. All failed in the face of the Blood Angels' unleashed fury and their ships enveloped Anahktor Centralis, a brutal constellation of lights in the night sky. There they waited, while below, the Iron Bulls rushed to man defences, herding their people to form shields around gun platforms and fortresses while the Blood Angels watched. Then, as dawn's purple haze coloured the horizon, the Blood Angels fell from the sky, at their head a host of the silver-masked Erelim, the Angel's Tears.

They chose as their target the single largest force of the Iron Bulls marshalling in defence of their throneworld, seeking to cut the heart from the enemy in a single stroke. Like meteors, the Drop Pods smashed home amid the Iron Bulls' lines, some opening like lethal flowers to reveal missile pods that spat flame and death, while others disgorged crimson-clad killers, their bolters roaring. With the formation of the enemy broken and its soldiers in disarray, the main force of the IXth Legion descended on fiery contrails, alighting at the battle's frenzied centre and throwing themselves into the fray without hesitation. What had begun as a battle swiftly became a rout and then a slaughter, as the Blood Angels pierced the heart of the enemy formation and slew their command echelon, throwing the Iron Bulls into chaos. The enemy driven before them, the Blood Angels, without pausing to regroup or resupply, drove forwards relentlessly.

Their sorrow concealed by the ornate masks of their Order, and bound by the oaths they had sworn, the Erelim and their brothers swept across the planet like a crimson tide. Any who raised arms against them were slaughtered, for this was not to be a battle, a matching of wits and blades in honest combat, but instead a massacre. The Blood Angels brought forth those devices and munitions that Sanguinius rarely gave countenance to the use of – the terror known as phosphex and the invidious curse of rad weapons. Cities became charnel fields of broken corpses, forests and fields became cinders and ash, and fortresses open and blackened wounds. Anahktor Centralis was not conquered, but ruined. No man at arms was left alive, no stone left upon stone and those of its people that survived the fighting would become serfs to labour in the belly of the Legion's ships or in distant manufactoria.

Thus ended the fighting in Anahktor, a bloody tribute to the rage that still festered at the heart of the IXth Legion. The last of the Iron Bulls to fall did so at the hand of Sanguinius himself, who cut a path into the palace of that system's petty ruler alone, save for a small cadre of his Sanguinary Guard. As they deployed, the last of the Iron Bulls, in huge horned exo-skeletal suits of rippling synthetic muscle and great diamond-toothed chain blades, sought to bar the Great Angel from his prize, but the Primarch was more than a match for such clumsy engines of war. Borne through the air on white wings now spattered in blood and gore, he swooped upon the ungainly suits, cleaving them apart or plucking them from the ground only to release them in a plummet to their doom, swiftly clearing his path to the throne room. There, the Great Angel himself dragged the quivering lordling from his throne and brought him forth to witness the ruin of his kingdom, the wrath of the Emperor and the price of his own treachery.

The White Scars

Numeration: The Vth Legion

Primogenitor: Jaghatai Khan

Cognomen: (Prior): Various (e.g., Star Hunters, Blood Debt, Vanguard, Grey Ghosts)

Observed Strategic Tendencies: Shock Assault Strikes, Highly Mobile Hit and Run Campaigns and Extended Unsupported Operations within Hostile Domains.

Noteworthy Domains: Chogoris/Mundus Planus (Primary), Terra (tertiary rights), the Kolarne Cluster (multiple tributary domains)

Allegiance: Fidelitas Scindo

'There is only one unforgivable lie.

That is the lie that says, this is the end, you are the conqueror, and now all that remains is to build high walls and shelter behind them. Now, the lie says, the world is safe.

All emperors are liars.'

From The Wisdom of the Khans: Sayings and Tales of the Chogorian Legion, as recorded by Ilya Ravallion

To each of His Legions, the Emperor bestowed a genetic legacy that would mould them into a set role, making each a matchless tool for the prosecution of that role. The Vth Legion were the pathfinders of the Great Crusade, ever in uncharted territory and far from the borders of the expanding Imperium, and oft forgotten by the chroniclers that followed in conquest's wake. Organised into small, mobile units, the Vth Legion ran before the armies of the Emperor during the final conquests on Terra, and then across the stars, sowing confusion and death in their wake. They were the swift blade that probed for weakness before a sudden and deadly strike, not the sledgehammer that some of their brother Legions had become. A subtle and deadly weapon in the hands of a master strategist, the Great Khan, Jaghatai, would come to forge those outcasts of the Legiones Astartes into a force that would overturn the scales of destiny itself.

As the dark days of the Horus Heresy unfolded, these unpredictable warriors were doubted by many, their loyalty questioned by those who should have been allies and assumed by those who would become enemies. Often the first Legion into the wilds at the edge of those few star charts to survive the Long Night, the White Scars had ever operated without the support of their brethren and rarely acted in concert with the other Legions. Where their brother Legions built legacies of trust and accumulated interlinked webs of treaties and oaths of support between them, the White Scars remained separate. What had at first been a matter of strategy soon became a tradition, one that saw the Vth Legion become a solitary and reclusive force, renowned for their independence and wilful nature even among the Legiones Astartes. Such was their reputation at the outset of the Horus Heresy, that those who sought to rule the Imperium, be they emperor or tyrant, eyed the Legion as a prize to be won and leashed to their ambitions, a fulcrum upon which to lever Mankind's civil war in their favour.

Origins: Terra's Forgotten Sons

As with much of the old lore regarding the Vth Legion, their earliest days and first campaigns are overlooked by many, obscured by time, blood and the reticence of the Legion itself. Yet in these beginnings can be seen the shadow of the Legion's future. Even from their inception, the Vth Legion were held apart from their brothers, rarely found in massed ranks among the assembled hosts of the Unification Wars, yet they were one of the first Legions to draw blood in the name of the Emperor. Taken first from the technomadic tribes of the Thulean Basin, whose hardy stock had traversed those icy wastes in vast mechanised crawlers throughout the long years of the Age of Strife, and later from the wider stock of Terran recruits, the warriors of the Vth Legion were the Unification's eyes and ears. While some of the earliest Legions, such as the XVIth, were committed to the front-lines of the initial conquest alongside the Emperor's Thunder Warriors, the Vth Legion was granted the solitary duty of seeking out the hidden fastnesses of the many gene-wrought demagogues and warlords that ruled the war-ravaged face of Old Earth.

In those earliest days, the Legion numbered only a few hundred warriors, and often operated in small cadres of less than a dozen. The operations to which they were assigned put the post-human physique of the Emperor's Space Marines to test in a way quite unlike the battlefield hell that awaited their fellows. Ever on the move, and far beyond the borders of the Emperor's ever-growing dominion, the Vth Legion endured the worst of the destruction wrought on Old Earth during the ravages of the Age of Strife, braving a landscape so twisted and broken by rad-phage, war and psy-plagues that mere humans could not have survived its touch. Roving far and wide, it was these warriors of the Vth Legion who charted the course of the Emperor's rise, surviving where few others could have, running ahead of the massed armies of Unification and seeking out the enemies in its path. Where they encountered mighty warlords and decadent empires that had stood against Old Night, they prowled the borders seeking the opportunity to strike, and where they encountered weakness, they left behind only corpses. By the time the main Legions of proto-Astartes and Thunder Warriors arrived, their foes were weakened and distracted by the work of the Vth Legion, made easy prey for the armies of Unification.

It was a task to which its early recruits were well-suited. The clansmen of the Thulean Basin had survived in the frozen salt-wastes of the north for centuries, fiercely independent and stoic but with a deep well of inventive cunning. Passing through the terror of Old Night by cutting themselves off amid the sub-zero wastelands of Thule in the far north, they well-understood the cruel dictates of survival. These were far more than superb killers, as their heritage as machine-smiths and expert survivors was carried across to the earliest Legion cadres. Once bent to the Emperor's will, they proved fine stock for His pathfinders, though many noted their wilful nature, their commanders prone to ignoring any orders save those of the Emperor or another commander who had earned their respect. This is likely another example of the Emperor's grand plan in action, some element of His foresight identifying some need for that very trait, despite the protest it raised among certain of His generals and advisers. Despite the ire caused by their insular nature, few could doubt the ability of these warriors, who soon gathered a measure of acceptance within the grand armies of Unification for their fortitude and shrewd intelligence.

Yet it was a task without glory. They operated for years at a time far from the centre of the conflict. Once the Vth had finished their bloody work in drawing out the enemies of the Emperor, charting their strongholds and leaving them weak, the other Legions marched forth to bring them to battle and defeat while the Vth moved on. Few battle honours from the wars of Unification record the sacrifice of the Vth Legion, and few now living know of the Star Hunters', as the first of these companies was known, daring raid on the Albian fortress of Dubris, paving the way for the initial invasions of that land, or the 83 day battle in the black catacombs of Kadiru, a key fortress in the Yndonesic domain of Ursh. Such hidden heroics were forgotten in the face of the public conquests carried out by the other Legions. Few within the Vth Legion showed any sense of outrage at this subtle slight, even taking a quiet pride in the silent role they played, but it served to isolate them among the ranks of the Legiones Astartes. They became, by circumstance and by choice, outsiders among the Emperor's elite, more at home in the wilds, where they followed no dictate but their own than at the heart of battle, subject to the whims of generals for whom they felt little kinship.

As the Emperor consolidated His hold on Terra and the surrounding worlds, the Vth Legion was among the first of His hosts to depart the Sol system, shattered into a hundred companies, each a tiny Legion of its own. These Pioneer Companies were each dispatched to follow those warp currents that flowed strongly in the aether about Sol, seeking out the lost worlds of Mankind and charting the strongholds of alien empires. It was the Pioneer Company of Captain Kornelius Dure, following one of the few warp currents known to the infrequent travellers that ventured out from Terra, that surveyed Cthonia, with his now infamous report that the world was '*...a nest of serpents coiling in the dark that we would be better to destroy*'. Horus was known to have

later remarked upon this report with some humour, and indeed favoured Captain Dure and his company, often requesting their assignment as pathfinders for his fleet. Indeed, as with a number of other orphaned Legions, Horus, alone among the great generals of that age, made a particular point of recognising the Pioneer Companies of the Vth Legion and in return the Terran veterans of the Vth treated Horus with a respect that they granted few others.

For over half a century, the Vth Legion fought a lonely piecemeal crusade, each of its companies separated by such a distance that each fleet slowly began to lose any sense of unity with its brethren. Once again, their heroics beyond the borders of the Emperor's ever-expanding domain garnered little praise or attention amongst the lords of the Imperium. Here, in these largely forgotten years, was the basis of the White Scars' mastery of hit and run warfare established by the necessity of their mission. They were rarely more than one thousand against the dark empires beyond the edge of the maps, the brave few standing against the terrors of the outer dark far from aid and succour. They struck without warning, raiding and killing, drawing out the foe and testing its defences and tactics, always watching and learning – broadcasting the knowledge won with the blood of their brothers so that the Expeditionary fleets could bring the Emperor's wrath down upon the enemies of Mankind.

In those early days, the Legion lived by one credo: each new day is a victory. Survival against impossible odds was the challenge they faced, one they defeated with a cold pragmatism and willingness to sacrifice everything in the name of victory. Each battle cost them a little more, one more brother dead or one more war machine damaged beyond repair, and as they fought further into the outer reaches of the galaxy, they found fewer and fewer chances to recoup their losses. Slowly and surely the Vth Legion was being eroded by the pressures of war and their own stubborn dedication to prosecuting it in their own way. To the warriors of the Vth, who had always been forced to struggle in the shadow of their brother Legions, the idea of asking for aid tasted worse than the ashes of their own demise. To live and die in a manner of their own choosing seemed the better choice. Were it not for the sudden discovery of the lost Primarch of the Vth Legion, an event unlooked for after fifty years of searching, the Legion might have fought on to extinction. Instead, they were transformed.

The Khan of Khans

The tale of Jaghatai Khan's early years is well-known. It is the subject of legends and folktales on his home world of Chogoris, sometimes listed on older Imperial star charts as Mundus Planus. It is this widespread embellishment that makes much of the fact regarding his achievements difficult to identify, as such the author has opted to utilise the version of the tale recorded by Horus Lupercal, which still resides within the archives of Terra. Of particular interest are Horus' initial notes on the world of Chogoris upon its discovery, '*... rich in both material and a remarkably stable and warlike strain of Mankind. A prize and unexpected find in these hinterlands of the empire.*' This, notes the Primarch, is in stark contrast to many of those worlds upon which the other Primarchs found themselves, often having to contend with lethal environments or debased breeds of humanity's lost kin. Jaghatai, by contrast, was adopted by the chief, or Khan, of one of Chogoris' many nomadic tribes. He faced the same trials that had plagued the horse-tribes of Chogoris for centuries, unending tribal raids and wars of feud and the slave raids and hunting parties of the southern empires.

His path turned to one of conquest in the wake of one such murder-raid, the culmination of some petty slight issued generations before. A rival tribe, most often identified in historical accounts as the Kurayed, fell upon his adopted father and slew him and his Keshig, an act which in the nomad culture of Chogoris demanded retaliation. In years gone past, the son of a fallen Khan would have set out on his own murder-raid, slain some few of the rival clan's own warriors or driven off their prize horses, perpetuating the endless cycle of the feud. Jaghatai chose a different path, and in a single night of blood and slaughter he put an end to both the feud and the Kurayed, leaving not one of that kindred alive. His reputation as a warrior of surpassing cruelty and skill, but little mercy, was born from this act, spreading across the Empty Quarter, as the rugged and sparsely inhabited western plains were known.

The young Khan pursued a campaign of subjugation among his own people, attacking each tribe in turn and offering them a simple choice: death or life under his rule. Having heard of the ruin he had made of the Kurayed, there were few who chose to oppose him and, in his wisdom, Jaghatai treated those who submitted freely with honour, raising many up to his Keshig to fight at his side. Tribes under his rule were consolidated, merged together or split apart in order to foster unity and end the feuds that had kept them at each other's throats for centuries. His own Keshig and tribe he filled with men and women of talent from across the plains, promoting ability and loyalty to the whole over bloodlines and old rivalries, and within the span of a few short decades, the nomadic tribes were unified under his control, naming him Khan of Khans.

Since before any elder of the nomadic tribes could remember, one empire had ruled much of Chogoris, an empire of tall cities and proud princes that lay far to the east of the Empty Quarter. The lands of the horse nomads, barren and inhospitable as they were, had always been beneath its notice, save as a hunting ground for bored nobles seeking to slake their bloodlust. One fateful hunting expedition chose the new Khan of Khans as its target, but their ambush quickly became a massacre, with Jaghatai butchering every last one of the would-be hunters, including the son of the Palatine – the emperor of the vast nation to the east. In retaliation, the Palatine marched his army of disciplined heavy foot and armoured lancers into the Empty Quarter to finally eradicate the tribesmen. There, the Khan of Khans met him with the full muster of the tribes and destroyed his army, making full use of the mobile tactics and speed he would later use to mould the White Scars.

This victory was the first step along a path of conquest that would see Jaghatai crowned ruler of the entire world of Chogoris. He prosecuted the same strategy that he had employed among the horse tribes, but on a grander scale. To each city and nation his undefeated armies encountered he offered his choice, to serve or to die, and with each victory and submission his power grew. With cruelty in one hand and generosity in the other, both held in plain sight for all his subjects to see, the Khagan overtook the world and bent it to his whims. He ended the wars that had wracked Chogoris, keeping the peace with the threat of utter ruin for those who transgressed his simple laws. What the Khagan might have created in isolation from the embers of civilisation on Chogoris will never be known, for it was but a short while after his ascension to the throne that the Emperor of Mankind arrived to change his destiny forever.

The Pioneer Companies

In its earliest incarnation, the Vth Legion was not the singular body that many of the other proto-Legions formed. It was a Legion in name only. Instead, it was organised into autonomous companies, each of which had few links to any of their brethren and operated entirely independently. Indeed, prior to the recall that was sent after the discovery of Jaghatai Khan, many of the Pioneer Companies had no contact with any other body of the Vth Legion and developed a set of traditions and rituals unique to that company. This was especially true as the Great Crusade progressed, with each company often forced to pursue recruitment as they travelled because supply and reinforcement convoys were rarely able to keep up with their rate of advance. Oddly, this brought several of the Pioneer Companies closer to the other Legions, especially where they fought in close proximity, as the Vth Legion warriors, still lacking a Primarch to rally around, began to adopt elements of the other Legions' practises. These distinct sub-cultures would endure beyond the integration of Jaghatai's new order, with many of them being subsumed into the pre-existing Chogorian obsession with small superstitions and others among the warrior lodges that permeated the Terran branches of the White Scars.

These Pioneer Companies were composed of as few as 500 and as many as 3,000 Legionaries; with records listing perhaps 800 known companies by the year 800.M30. The sum total of the entire V^th^ Legion is estimated to have been around 80,000 at this point in the Great Crusade, but is rarely known to have gathered in strengths of greater than a few thousand, barring such exceptional incidents as the Battle for Thapsus in late 744.M30. Though spread thin, the Vth Legion remained a sizable force, mostly due to the opportunistic recruitment patterns practised by many of the companies of the Legion to offset the relative scarcity of reinforcements received from Terra. This practise caused no little friction between the Legions, as the warriors of the Vth had on a number of occasions encroached upon territory ceded to the more established Legions. In particular, both Ferrus Manus and Leman Russ are known to have made issue of the Legion recruiting from worlds whose populations were pledged to them, and only the direct intervention of Horus Lupercal is known to have prevented the censure of the Vth's errant warriors.

Within each company there was to be found a tremendous diversity of sub-divisions and heraldry, the most common being the old Terran standard of the Unity armies which sub-divided the larger company into groups of 100 warriors, each commanded by a Captain and one among that number acting as overall commander, a First Captain. Heraldry among the early V^th^ Legion was just as varied. Most Pioneer Companies maintained the numeral that marked the designation granted them by the Emperor, but also adopted a number of unofficial insignia of their own, marking the various titles granted them by both the Imperial forces they served and the enemies they hunted. A sample of these titles and heraldic devices, as found in the *Liber Armorum Terranicus*, shows a growing lack of unity between the Legion's far flung sons:

Liber Armorum Terranicus, Warrior-brotherhoods of the Legiones Astartes Vol.3, the Vth Legion **(excerpt from 756.M30 edition)**

Entries organised to indicate company designation, known cognomen and last commanding officer::

224th Pioneer Company
None known
Ltnt. Apion Hansa

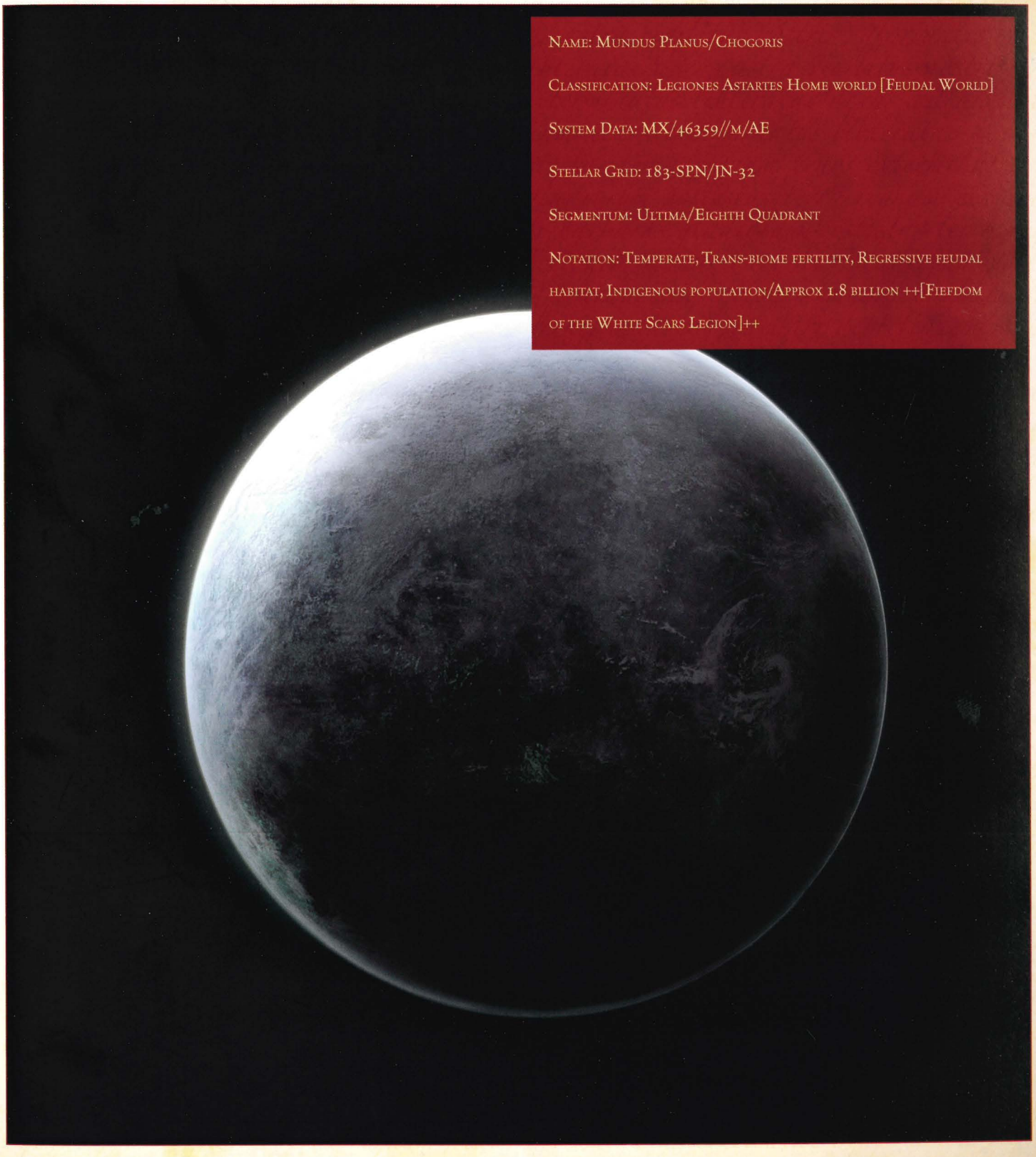
666th Pioneer Company
'Void Devils'
Cpt. Theon Juoksa

3rd Pioneer Company
'Lions of Thapsis'
Cpt. Kornelius Dure

99th Pioneer Company
'The Enders'
Cpt. Ikem Aghur

Chogoris: The Empty Quarter

Ironically, despite their role as pathfinders and discoverers, it was not a Pioneer Company of the Vth that would discover lost Chogoris, but instead a fleet of the XVIth Legion accompanied by both Horus and the Emperor. On that long-isolated world, Jaghatai had prospered, binding together the fractured tribes of the hinterlands to conquer empires and subjugate the entire world to his will. It was an achievement to rival any of those of his brother-Primarchs in their foundling years, and the Emperor hailed him as a true son and inheritor of the legacy He had prepared for him. The Great Khan, himself a builder of empires, was handed a destiny that saw him resigned to the role of servant and not master, bound to the ambitions of the Emperor. Such abasement did not come easily to such a conqueror as he, one who had slain kings and tyrants across the breadth of Chogoris, but still the Great Khan knelt before this Emperor.



Name: Mundus Planus/Chogoris

Classification: Legiones Astartes Home world [Feudal World]

System Data: MX/46359//m/AE

Stellar Grid: 183-SPN/JN-32

Segmentum: Ultima/Eighth Quadrant

Notation: Temperate, Trans-biome fertility, Regressive feudal habitat, Indigenous population/Approx 1.8 billion ++[Fiefdom of the White Scars Legion]++

The Price of Freedom

Many chroniclers have often overlooked the decisions that faced many of the Emperor's Primarchs upon their reunion with their father. Most had risen to become supreme rulers, kings and even gods, for they were the apex of that lost science of the Dark Age of Technology, transcendent creatures that far exceeded the capabilities of mere humans. Yet, with the arrival of the Emperor, they suddenly found themselves subject to the will of a being even greater than they, bereft of what many might have assumed was their divine right to rule lesser creatures or guide their devoted servants. Could any mortal king have bent the knee with the equanimity shown by the Primarchs in the tales we tell now in the wake of Horus' rebellion?

Some among the scholars of the court consider it a sin to ascribe such human emotions as jealousy or the wilful fires of ambition to such figures of legend, especially in an age that needs its heroes untarnished and pure. It is, however, more of a sin, I think, to ignore the failings that made those tragic figures great. That they chose to forgo their crowns and ambitions despite their desires and in order to serve a greater cause is a greater tale than to imply that they were overcome with blind loyalty as soon as the Emperor discovered them. To those who find such an assumption hard to believe or somehow distasteful, I remind you that the Emperor once had 20 sons. What choices did the two missing Primarchs make that the Emperor found it needful to remove them from history?

Most historical accounts lead us to believe that Jaghatai was overawed by the Emperor and submitted without question, but his own journals and writings show a more pragmatic reasoning behind the submission. Jaghatai, who had struggled long with the disunity of his adopted people, saw clearly the benefits of the Imperium and the Emperor's secular doctrine of the Imperial Truth, and in the ranks of the Luna Wolves he saw the dire cost of opposition. It was the same choice he himself had once offered to the tribes and cities of Chogoris, and even when it was cloaked in pomp and ceremony, the Khan of Khans understood what the Emperor's offer meant: to live as His vassal or perish as His rival. So the Khagan bargained for his loyalty and that of those he ruled, taking from the Emperor those guarantees he deemed fair regarding the treatment of the people of Chogoris and of his role in the future empire. He would fight once again for unity and in secret revelled in the new challenge before him, at last able to slip the bonds of duty that had kept him busy with the mundane realities of governorship on Chogoris.

Despite having already mastered the strategies of conquest in his own war against the petty empires of Chogoris, Jaghatai Khan was unfamiliar with the advanced weapons and war engines of the Imperium. With fighting across the galaxy reaching a fevered intensity, the forces of the Emperor could ill spare any Primarch for lengthy training in the etiquette of the Terran court or the intricacies of Imperial history. All were needed upon the front lines as the expanding Imperium began to encounter more and more powerful xenos realms and fallen kingdoms of Mankind hidden in the dark void. The conquest of Chogoris was, in the eyes of the Emperor and many of the Primarchs, more than proof of his skill at war. Indeed, of all of his new brothers, only Roboute Guilliman and Rogal Dorn objected to the all too brief period of induction that Jaghatai received. Both felt that to leave the new Primarch bereft of a true understanding of the Imperium's foundation and culture would leave him ill-prepared to integrate properly with its factions and politics. Despite these objections, whose foresight was to prove unfortunate, the full authority of Legion Master of the Vth was invested in Jaghatai, known among his brothers as the Khan and among his own as the Khagan, the Khan of Khans.

Such a title, Master of the Vth Legion, held little meaning at that time in history, for the Vth was scattered to the far corners of the galaxy, absorbed in a thousand separate wars. He was master of a Legion of vagabonds, a situation that might have sat less well with others of his brethren, but was a challenge well-suited to the Great Khan's talents and history. Just as he had on the vast plains of Chogoris, the Great Khan sought to build a conquering army from insular nomadic bands, and he began in the same fashion. Recruiting from among those of his Chogorian comrades that were of an age to undergo the arduous transformative surgery and be reborn as Space Marines, the Great Khan formed a new core of warriors for his Legion. At the same time, he dispatched a grand summons, calling upon all of the disparate bands of the Vth Legion, the scattered Pioneer Companies that warred across the galaxy, to attend him. Proclaimed by astropathic signal and courier ship, Jaghatai's call would take many years to reach the furthest of his warriors. After his discovery in 865.M30, the Khagan would wait for nearly a decade for the majority of the Pioneer Companies to assemble at Chogoris, the most isolated or heavily engaged still out of contact even as late as 000.M31. The force that finally assembled in the skies above Chogoris in those early years of Jaghatai's command was not a unified Legion. Each company kept to their own, looking on those who should have been their brothers with suspicion and no little disdain, a gathering of strangers in a strange land.

When the Khagan brought them all together on the wide plains of the Empty Quarter, he beheld a thousand different heraldries on warriors of a hundred different worlds bound together only by the tenuous strands of their shared genetic legacy. The Khan of Khans wedded those genetic ties to the culture of Chogoris, making this the glue to unify his Legion. Through the rituals and traditions of the Chogorian hill tribes, they became the White Scars that day, their loyalty to the Khagan and each other secured by the trials of blood and pain they had undergone and the oaths they had sworn. The Khan of Khans gave them more than scars, encouraging the study of the '*Noble Pursuits*', as they were known on Chogoris – such things as calligraphy, hunting and the telling of ancient tales. He made the ways of Chogoris the Truth of his Legion, a strange blend of practicality and superstition that was ill at ease with the strict tenets of the Imperial Truth which denied any and all brands of religion. Jaghatai's refusal in later years to amend the practises of his Legion to more closely fit the Imperial Truth were yet another source of conflict between the Great Khan and some of his brothers, notably Lorgar and Roboute Guilliman.

This was but the first part of the Khagan's strategy, for tradition alone would not suffice. In the wake of the games and ceremonies conducted on Chogoris, he led the combined ranks of the newly christened White Scars on campaign, the first battles they had fought as a unified host since leaving Terra.

The Khagan chose the lawless worlds of the Kolarne Circle for his initiation campaign. This region of space had been scouted several decades before by the 103rd Pioneer Company, the Soul Hunters, and was found to be teeming with wild outposts of renegade strains of Mankind and roaming xenos hosts. On each of the dozens of feral and hellish worlds that made up the Circle, a long and vicious struggle awaited the White Scars, with few obvious gains in terms of strategic resource or value. However, the Khagan had chosen this battleground and his strategy with care. He set his Legion against enemies that could not be overcome by any one company alone. Only by working as one Legion would they prevail. He dispersed the Keshig he had raised from Chogoris, the core of his new White Scars throughout the various companies, warriors whose names would only grow with the passing of years: Qin Xa, Yesugei, Hasik and others besides. These warriors he trusted to spread his teaching and to lead by example, to stand as his champions among the Vth Legion as it went to war in his name.

Of the 80,000 warriors that they led into the fighting, one in ten would perish in the five years of struggle to cleanse the Circle, a baptism of fire and blood that sealed the bonds between the survivors stronger than any simple oath. The Orkish hordes of Sengr Mar and Vorgheist were cut to pieces in a series of hit and run campaigns that bore the tell-tale hallmarks of the Chogorian plains-tribes' tactics. Severely outnumbered by their foe, these tactics, intimately familiar to the Chogorian initiates of Jaghatai's inner circle, were best suited to make the most of the White Scars' native ferocity and war-honed skills. Those companies assigned to the deepest systems of the Circle fought alone and unsupported for almost three years before the remainder of the Legion secured the outer regions. Here the long-honed survival skills of the Pioneer Companies were put to the test, wedded to the Chogorian recruits' savagery and talent with a blade. Where other Legions might have faltered or fallen back to regroup, losing the momentum of victory, these rugged warriors thrived, taking heart from the presence of their new lord.

In every battle in which he fought, Jaghatai led the assault. At first, the Legion simply followed him into the maelstrom but as tales of the Primarch's wild valour and consummate skill spread among the warriors of the Vth Legion, they soon began to compete to fight by his side. It was his example that stood as their banner throughout the conflict and it was to the Khagan and each other whom they were bound, not to the distant dream of the Imperium or any one of its worlds, but only to the Khan of Khans and the savage joy he took in war and in life. In those turbulent times, such things were considered of little note, for none would countenance the idea that a Primarch sworn to the Emperor would ever forsake his vows and, as such, absolute loyalty to the Khan was considered the same as absolute loyalty to the Imperium.

With the final battle for the Kolarne Circle fought and won upon the desolate ash-fields of Kolarne itself, the many inhabited worlds fell into the Great Khan's hands. Those worlds had served to bind his Legion together in blood and war, and now they would serve to rebuild it. From the wide plains of Chogoris, the rugged wastes of Kolarne and Old Earth's many recruitment camps, the Khagan replenished the ranks of the Legion and the White Scars emerged from the Kolarne Circle campaign a Legion reborn. No longer were they a shadow that haunted the fringes of the Great Crusade – the Great Khan had brought them into the light and he intended to stand at the forefront of the Emperor's Great Crusade, shoulder to shoulder with the other Legions.

The Laughing Killers

The Vth Legion returned to the Great Crusade not as the Pioneer Companies of old, but as the White Scars, united as a true Legion. This was the Great Crusade's apex of glory, the last century of the 30th Millennium. The nascent Imperium had pushed its borders to the very edges of the galaxy and thrown down the dragons that lurked at the margins of its ancient star charts. Now it grappled with those who would challenge its supremacy. Many terrible hosts and fel empires sought to lay claim to what was the rightful domain of Mankind and the Emperor, and it fell to the Legiones Astartes to break them utterly. The White Scars were to number among the heroes of this age, spreading across the stars to bring war and death in the name of their new master.

Though they lacked the numbers of some of their brother Legions, they were unmatched in the sheer impetuous fervour with which they made war.

Historia Terra Regnum

The First Blooding

The gathering on Chogoris saw the first occurrence of a ritual that would grant the Vth Legion its new title, the White Scars, and seal its bond as a unified host. Adapted from the traditions of the Chogorian tribes, the Blooding, also known as the Ascension, is a simple ritual, dispensing with much of the shamanistic pageantry of the original. It comprises but two parts, a cut and a name. On the open fields of the Empty Quarter that day, more than 50,000 warriors took up blades in forms beyond count and cut a mark upon the flesh of their own faces, each gauging the depth and pattern of the wound to mark their loyalty. The scars inflicted as part of the ritual vary in size, shape and placement, and among the original tribesmen of Chogoris, this would serve to mark out different tribes and bloodlines, though among those not born of Chogoris, the significance was less important. Among later generations of the Legion, certain patterns of scarring began to identify separate Brotherhoods within the Legion, but such patterns did not begin to emerge until the last few decades of M30.

The second part of the ritual, conducted on that first day with the blood of the scarring still bright on the first White Scars' skin, was to choose new names to represent their new lives as part of the Ordu of Jaghatai, as warriors of the White Scars, discarding the lives that had gone before. Such symbolism is fairly common among the various warrior societies that make up much of the Imperium's vast armies, with many of the Legions employing similar trials for their recruits. Such ceremonies have been employed for centuries as tools to enforce solidarity and loyalty among the most brutal of warrior societies, those tasked with the most onerous of duties and the harshest of sacrifices. On Chogoris, such rituals had held the tribes together through centuries of murder-raids and slave hunts, and Jaghatai knew well its power to harden the soul and bind warriors together. The names themselves were symbolic, and no strict pattern has ever been enforced on newly marked White Scars. That first generation on the fields of Chogoris named themselves for their deeds, while the more recent levies of the Legion chose names from the world of Chogoris in honour of their Primarch.

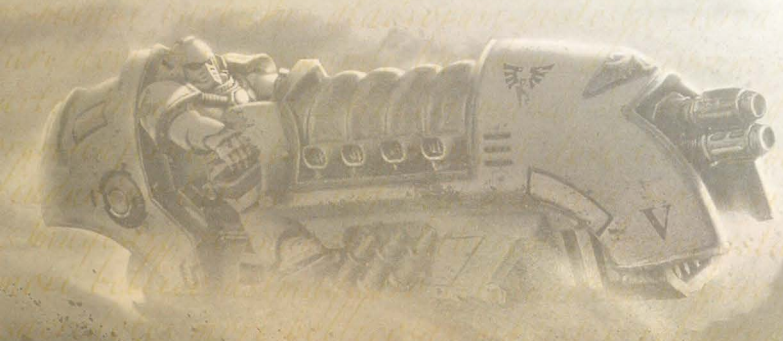
These were heady days full of fire and conquest, the wild rush of unceasing war against enemies too numerous to count. Where other Legions sought to prosecute a war of stern discipline and careful planning, conquering with implacable might and securing those domains they seized, the White Scars descended upon the foe like a storm from clear skies. Where the enemy was weak or exposed, they enveloped and overran its positions without mercy, using speed and fury to overwhelm any defence. Where it was strong or well-emplaced they harried the enemy where it was weak, leaving it vulnerable to the Legions that followed the trail of destruction they wrought. Many tales of their exploits speak equally of their ferocious skill-at-arms and the strategic insight of their commanders, different in style to that of other Legions, wilder and more direct, but no less effective.

Some considered them little more than barbaric reavers, akin to the wild butchers of Angron's red Legion or the executioners of Russ', but the records of their campaigns suggest otherwise. They were pathfinders in both a tactical and strategic sense, amongst the keenest and most proficient breed of the Legiones Astartes created by the Emperor. Exhaustive plans and interminable preparations were not their ways, often leaving them at odds with more deliberate warriors like the sons of Dorn or Guilliman. Yet they valued learning and knowledge highly, many among them skilled as artificers, philosophers and artists. They gathered wisdom as other Legions gathered weapons, to be kept at the ready until the time came to unleash them upon the foe. They were the wind, everywhere and nowhere, insubstantial and yet forceful, and they took to the duty they were given with a passion, taking joy from the thrill of battle and the hunt across the stars. As Sanguinius is recorded to have once said of the reborn Vth Legion, '*...they smile often and they laugh when they kill*'.

Unlike the brutal sons of Angron or the wild wolves of Fenris, the White Scars did not lack in discipline, and though they wore the cloak of the savage, they were not the same wild killers as those more infamous of their kin. Their nature was untamed, but still bound by the chains of duty and honour as defined by the Chogorian code. They were merciless and sometimes cruel on the attack and often seen as insolent or fractious, but such rumours were founded on misunderstanding. When the White Scars granted no mercy to their foe, they did so not for the joy of simple slaughter, but in honour of the valour shown them, they held back nothing just as had a worthy foe. When they failed to respect the policies and plans of others, it was because their own ways served them better, rarely did they make accusations of their own, allowing the results they garnered to speak for the rightness of their actions. They valued courtesy and forthright honesty over protocol and rigid adherence to rules ill-suited for the battlefield, but did not fail to punish those who transgressed the rules they set themselves.

Yet, despite these qualities they were often seen as the least among their kin, followers and not lords, a fact that sat ill with warriors of such skill and dedication. For much of the Great Crusade they remained outsiders to most of their brethren, few among the Primarchs sought the company of Jaghatai Khan and his sons, and Jaghatai did little to encourage them. Some found the strategies by which his Legion fought to be flawed, especially the inflexible sons of Dorn and Guilliman, while others looked down upon the trapping of Chogorian tradition that bound the Legion together. The Khan of Khans did little to dispel his reputation as a crude barbarian and wanton killer, keeping his own counsel and the company of those who cared to see past the veil of rumour that hid the true character of his Legion. Of all of his brothers, the Khagan found common cause with but a handful. Of these the closest was Magnus of Prospero, for he was also an outcast in the small society of their peers and a man of integrity and brusque honesty, those few records of the two often note this friendship between two otherwise isolated Primarchs. Horus, who appreciated talent above appearances, also showed some favour to the Khagan, as did Sanguinius who had ever been a statesman and diplomat among his often quarrelsome brothers. Of the others there is little recorded, possibly as there were few occasions where the Primarchs gathered in numbers and fewer still where the Khagan was present.

Jaghatai Khan was ever to be found on the move, always where he was least expected and always at that critical locus that would decide the fate of battles and empires. Yet, as the Great Crusade moved into its final throes in the first years of M31, the White Scars found themselves called upon less and less. The Emperor's Great Crusade had eclipsed its major rivals and charted most of the fractured and changed galaxy. Where, at the beginning of the long war the maps had been blank and the enemies unknown and terrifying, they were now replete and Mankind's enemies largely known and cowed. In these final years of the conquest there were fewer wild spaces for the White Scars to make war as they liked. They were becoming obsolete, unnecessary to the empire that was to be; the Khan of Khans knew it and it made him restless. The chance to run ahead of the storm, to exult in the unknown and the sheer joy of the destruction that follows was fading, leaving only the dull work of governance. Things were becoming ordered and known – they were winning, and in a final victory the White Scars would be undone. The Khan could sense that a choice was coming, a grand choice. They would be given the chance to be again what they had once been – but in doing so they would need to betray all that they had fought for. The other choice, no less invidious, was to remain true to their oaths and bound to a slow diminishment.



Unit and Formation Structure within the Legion

As has been noted, the Vth Legion has never adhered closely to the strictures of the *Principia Bellicosa*, that great treatise that informed the basis of most of the early Legions' organisation and structure. Lacking in the numbers that allowed many of the other Legions to operate as fully-fledged

war hosts, the Vth Legion was originally organised into small Pioneer Companies, each operating as a separate and independent force. This independence of operation and command was both a necessity due to the size and mission of the early Vth Legion and a legacy of the fierce spirit of its original recruits. Each Pioneer Company operated as an augmented line company, comprising perhaps 1,000 Legionaries and a varying array of specialist detachments, with each unique in its exact configuration and total fighting strength. Over the first century of the Great Crusade, these companies continued to deviate from the standard organisational pattern of the *Principia Bellicosa*, in part due to the increasing difficulty of resupplying them. The rediscovery of Jaghatai Khan on Chogoris brought an end to this era of independent operations and saw the Legion go through a complete re-organisation.

By 865.M30, there were approximately 70,000 warriors in the Vth Legion, which would later increase to around 95,000 at the peak of the Legion's strength shortly before 007.M31. The Great Khan reformed these warriors into a number of Hordes, a formation that stood above the Brotherhood in the Legion's structure. In creating his new Legion, the Great Khan was careful to split up the old Pioneer Companies, mixing warriors of differing origins together with new recruits from his home world of Chogoris to constitute the new Hordes. Most documents dating to that time place the number of original Hordes at five, although some accounts place the number as high as seven. The exact number is difficult to ascertain due to the irregular size of these formations, as both the original Hordes and those that would follow varied wildly in size, with the smallest numbering little more than 5,000 warriors and the largest as many as 20,000. The difference in size did not appear to indicate any tactical or strategic speciality, but rather was tied to the will of the Horde's commander, known in the newly re-organised White Scars as a Noyan-khan. Indeed, the various Hordes often fluctuated wildly in size during the transition from one Noyan-khan to another, with warriors transferring between Hordes, or even splitting off to form new Hordes at the whims of either the Noyan-khan or Jaghatai himself. This process seems to have been intended to allow each individual commander to operate efficiently within the bounds of their ability and strategic preferences, rather than enforcing a strict organisational system upon them.

Whether this is the spectre of the old Pioneer Companies and their independent spirit, or part of the Great Khan's Chogorian heritage is unknown, but its effectiveness when combined with the free-spirited nature of the Vth Legion has been demonstrated in battles beyond count. It has, however, caused a number of difficulties with both their brother Legions and with the logistics and command echelons of the Divisio Militaris. A number of Great Crusade operations have encountered problems properly classifying White Scars detachments, both for purposes of resupply and of properly gauging the threat level of opposing forces. On Algeron VII, where two Hordes of White Scars were deployed for harrowing operations against renegade human enclaves, Great Crusade Divisio Logisticus supplied munitions and supplies for two standard Legiones Astartes Chapters, only to find this insufficient for the two over-sized Hordes sent by the White Scars. On Therona Secundus, an Ultramarines grand task force besieging a Fra'al stronghold requested reinforcement by a similar-sized force of the Legiones Astartes, only for Divisio Strategists to mistakenly assign a nearby White Scars Horde to the conflict. The Horde, numbering half the strength of the Ultramarines force, fought bravely as a part of the assault force, but its relatively low strength forced the Ultramarines to endure higher casualties than their strict protocols would allow. The warriors of Ultramar, always dubious of those who chose to disregard the logic of the *Principia Bellicosa*, saw this as a failure of the White Scars, one among a number of one-sided grudges – for the White Scars marked the Therona conflict as a great victory against adversity, and spoke highly of the Ultramarines' fortitude.

The only other main organisational unit within the White Scars was the Brotherhood, a unit roughly equivalent to the standard company. Just like the larger Hordes, each Brotherhood varies in size quite widely, with some being formed of less than a few hundred warriors and others up to several thousand. Again, this disparity is rarely directly linked to the tactical role of the Brotherhood but rather the preferences and charisma of the Khan who led it. That being true, many Brotherhoods also tended to favour a specific mode of engagement, with the majority being outfitted and trained to operate as skirmish forces and rapid strike units. These most typical Brotherhoods were almost always mechanised units, in that the entire force of the Brotherhood was either mounted on jetbikes or supplied with other forms of rapid transport. Brotherhoods specialising in either long range combat or siege work were in a distinct minority and often among the smallest of these formations. This left the White Scars at something of a disadvantage in some combat theatres, forcing them to either rely on their own innate versatility to make do or to draft auxillia units into their line of battle to cope with specialised combat situations.

Within each Brotherhood the exact roster of units varied considerably and rarely adhered to standard company structures seen within the other Legions. Though each Brotherhood was a unique formation, most were formed of a core of jetbike-mounted troops, although these were sometimes known to fight dismounted in the style of more standard tactical units. In addition to this core of highly mobile strike troops was a number of more specialised units, of which the exact nature is highly variable. Most common among the various Brotherhoods were reconnaissance cadres or close assault specialists, roles which held particular value within the Chogorian traditions that sat at the heart of the White Scars doctrines. The inclusion of units that fall outside of these preferences, most especially static heavy weapons support units, was rarer but far from unknown. Indeed, some Brotherhoods were composed almost entirely of such units. Such specialised Brotherhoods were not pariahs among their swifter brethren, but often honoured for their role in the Legion's victories and their willingness to sacrifice the thrill of the hunt for victory. Most Brotherhoods also included what the White Scars referred to as a Keshig, which indicated a body of troops somewhere between a life guard for the Khan and an elite reserve intended to bolster both the fighting spirit and tactical firepower of line troops. Given the aggressive nature of most White Scars tactics, these units often formed the forefront of any assault, and most often contained the most skilled and experienced warriors within the Brotherhood.

Among the more extreme deviations from standard practise within the White Scars Legion were their so-called weather-witches. These were the Librarian-adepts fielded by the Legion during the earliest days of the Librarius experiment, their training and role dictated as much by the superstitions of the Chogorian tribesmen as by the standardised training coda of the fledgling Librarius. They quickly came to fill the role of mystics and advisers to the Khans, more akin to primitive shamans to outside eyes than to the ideal of the warrior-scholar of the more

orthodox Legions. Yet beneath the veneer of their shamanistic heritage lay a surprisingly complex position, serving their brethren as counsellors and mediators as well as shields against aetheric menace, and with a deep understanding of the Warp rooted in both Chogorian mysticism and the scientific studies of the Imperium's greatest scholars.

In many ways, the studied respect these early adepts displayed for Warp phenomena showed a wiser approach than that of more secular scholars whose approach was rooted in science and often dismissive of the real threat concealed within the aether. In battle, the Stormseers stirred the Warp to aid their brethren, preferring more subtle applications of psychic power than crude bolts of power. They obscured the advance of the White Scars with fog, wind and rain, and impeded the foe with relentless flurries of hail or foul monsoons. Many of the Vth Legion's victories are founded on the cunning application of both the Stormseers' psychic power and their sage advice. Despite their abilities, the Stormseers were most often judged on their appearance, which to the more stringent adherents of the Imperial Truth harkened back to the dark days of Long Night on Terra and superstitions of religion which the Emperor Himself had condemned. Among their most vocal opponents was Mortarion, whose innate hatred of the psyker was only exacerbated by the positions of influence the Stormseers held within their Legion, but he was not alone in questioning their loyalty to the tenants of the Imperial Truth and the Great Crusade itself.

Among the various specialised units common within Legiones Astartes ranks, there were some rarely seen among the White Scars. Most prominent amongst these were the assault troops known as Destroyers, dedicated to the deployment of proscribed weaponry and the utter annihilation of the foe. The tactics employed by these cadres in other Legions were considered anathema by the White Scars, whose joy in open combat and reverence for the unspoiled wilderness of many frontier worlds was ill at ease with such wanton destruction. Destroyer cadres did exist within the Legion, but in limited numbers. Known as the Karaoghlanlar, or the Dark Sons of Death, their armour was painted a dull black and festooned with shamanic charms to ward off the evil spirits that followed in their wake. These grim warriors, often considered deranged and as omens of evil tidings by their fellows, did not serve with any single Brotherhood but were instead placed under the direct supervision of the Stormseer Council, only deployed when both Khan and seer agreed they be set loose. This apparently pagan superstition appeared to serve simply as a tool to vilify the use of the extreme measures represented by the Destroyers, a choice known to have originated with the Great Khan himself, who held little respect for those who resorted to such measures too frequently.

Another notable exception within the ranks of the White Scars was the almost complete lack of any kind of position dedicated to the enforcement of military law. The White Scars never operated any kind of disciplinary corps, the officers known as consul-opsequiri in the *Principia Bellicosa*. Despite this, they also recorded one of the lowest rates of internal dispute and other infractions under Divisio military law. Some claim that this record is due to the White Scars' insular nature and unwillingness to properly report their activities, while others note that the White Scars maintain a complex code of honour, with several units that might be described as penal units by outsiders. Of these, the most well-known is the Kharash, a temporary body of warriors filled by volunteers whenever the need for diversionary or shock assault tactics occurs. Though assigned duties considered near-suicidal by many observers, the Kharash never lacked for volunteers, with those seeking to expunge some perceived sin equally matched by those seeking advancement through the honour attached to serving with the Kharash and surviving.

Auxiliary Orders of the White Scars

Several bodies of warriors existed outside of the Brotherhood structure into which the vast majority of the White Scars were organised. Some of these Orders reported directly to the Great Khan, while others were truly independent and operated according to the whims of their commanders in support of other Brotherhoods or Hordes. Given the decentralised nature of the White Scars organisation and the emphasis they placed on individual initiative, many of these Orders operated without direct oversight by the Great Khan, and were to an extent laws unto themselves. A brief list of the more prominent of these organisations has been included below:

The Karaoghlanlar – The *'Dark Sons of Death'*, these warriors fulfilled the role of Destroyers within the White Scars and answered directly to the Council of Seers. They were deployed in combat when the utter annihilation of the enemy was required, as well as for certain ritual roles in the wake of key campaigns.

The Burgediin Sarhvu – The *'Falcon's Claws'*, this small Order was composed of veteran warriors who had undergone certain initiatory rites on Chogoris. On the battlefield, they served as hunters and forward scouts, experts in survival and the quiet elimination of enemy commanders, while outside of combat they acted as the keepers of those servo-raptors maintained by many Brotherhoods as both symbols of their heritage and as battlefield reconnaissance assets.

The Kharash – Less a formal Order and more a temporary assembly, the *'Kharash'* was assembled whenever the need for a diversionary or shock assault force arose. Formed only of volunteers, these units were both a punishment and an honour, as those who survived assignment to the Kharash were often considered to be both lucky and skilled by their comrades. The Kharash were also one of the few White Scars units to make routine use of Tactical Dreadnought Armour.

The Uhaan Solban – This Order comprised almost every one of the limited number of Dreadnoughts in service with the White Scars. Concerned primarily with guarding the gene-seed repositories of the Vth Legion on Chogoris and Terra, these dour half-dead warriors were rarely seen on the field of battle.

The Akoghlanlar – Composed entirely of those personnel inducted into the medicae corps of the Vth Legion, the *'Akoghlanlar'* were the ritual opposites of the Legion's Destroyers, dedicated to the preservation of their brothers and the legacy of Jaghatai. Unlike most of the other Orders represented here, these warriors were spread across the various Brotherhoods, serving individually rather than as a single entity. It was only on rare occasions that the entire Order gathered, often in service of one of Chogoris' obscure rituals.

Command Hierarchy

Of all of the Legions, the White Scars maintained the most decentralised command structure, rivalled only by that of the Alpha Legion. While Jaghatai Khan remained the ultimate authority, the various Noyan-khans, the commanders of the Hordes that made up the bulk of the Legion, exercised a remarkable amount of personal authority and most often operated independently of the Great Khan. Unlike many Legions, it was rare for the White Scars to assemble in forces numbering more than one or two Hordes – indeed, it was far more common for forces as small as one or more Brotherhoods to operate alone within any given war zone. Far more common was the attachment of smaller White Scars forces to the fleets of other Legions, though even in these situations the Khans of those gathered Brotherhoods retained independent command of their forces.

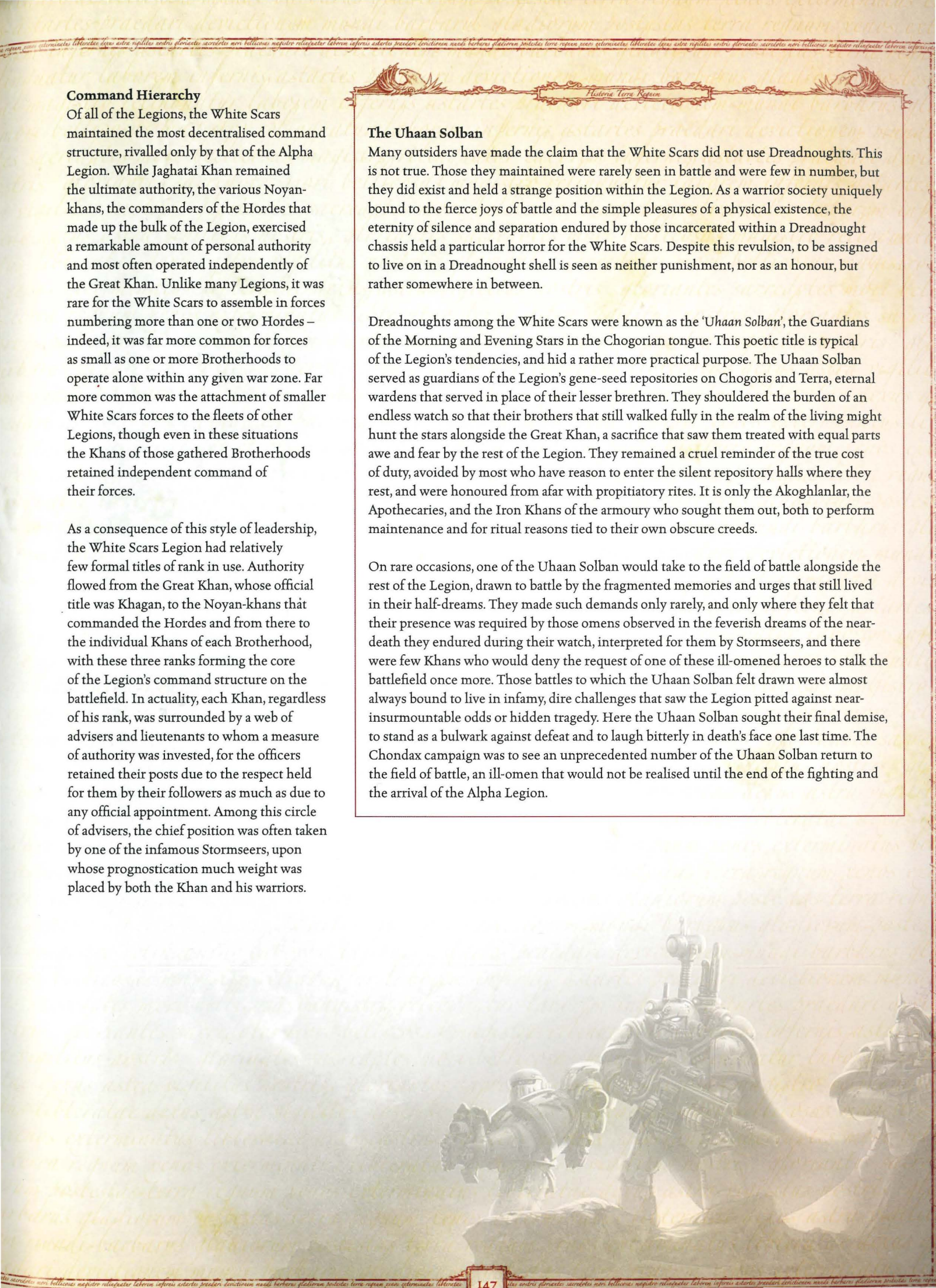
As a consequence of this style of leadership, the White Scars Legion had relatively few formal titles of rank in use. Authority flowed from the Great Khan, whose official title was Khagan, to the Noyan-khans that commanded the Hordes and from there to the individual Khans of each Brotherhood, with these three ranks forming the core of the Legion's command structure on the battlefield. In actuality, each Khan, regardless of his rank, was surrounded by a web of advisers and lieutenants to whom a measure of authority was invested, for the officers retained their posts due to the respect held for them by their followers as much as due to any official appointment. Among this circle of advisers, the chief position was often taken by one of the infamous Stormseers, upon whose prognostication much weight was placed by both the Khan and his warriors.

The Uhaan Solban

Many outsiders have made the claim that the White Scars did not use Dreadnoughts. This is not true. Those they maintained were rarely seen in battle and were few in number, but they did exist and held a strange position within the Legion. As a warrior society uniquely bound to the fierce joys of battle and the simple pleasures of a physical existence, the eternity of silence and separation endured by those incarcerated within a Dreadnought chassis held a particular horror for the White Scars. Despite this revulsion, to be assigned to live on in a Dreadnought shell is seen as neither punishment, nor as an honour, but rather somewhere in between.

Dreadnoughts among the White Scars were known as the '*Uhaan Solban*', the Guardians of the Morning and Evening Stars in the Chogorian tongue. This poetic title is typical of the Legion's tendencies, and hid a rather more practical purpose. The Uhaan Solban served as guardians of the Legion's gene-seed repositories on Chogoris and Terra, eternal wardens that served in place of their lesser brethren. They shouldered the burden of an endless watch so that their brothers that still walked fully in the realm of the living might hunt the stars alongside the Great Khan, a sacrifice that saw them treated with equal parts awe and fear by the rest of the Legion. They remained a cruel reminder of the true cost of duty, avoided by most who have reason to enter the silent repository halls where they rest, and were honoured from afar with propitiatory rites. It is only the Akoghlanlar, the Apothecaries, and the Iron Khans of the armoury who sought them out, both to perform maintenance and for ritual reasons tied to their own obscure creeds.

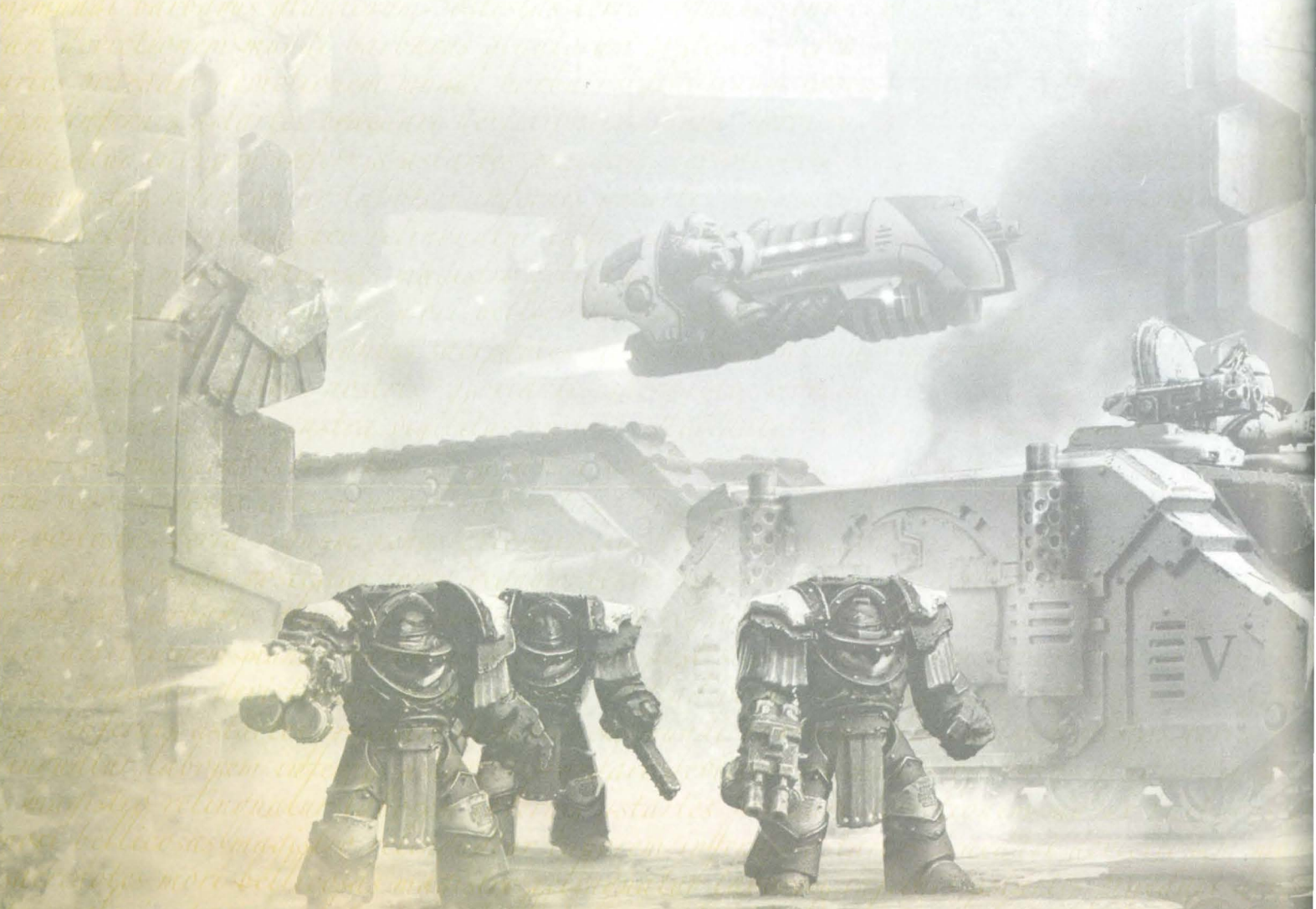
On rare occasions, one of the Uhaan Solban would take to the field of battle alongside the rest of the Legion, drawn to battle by the fragmented memories and urges that still lived in their half-dreams. They made such demands only rarely, and only where they felt that their presence was required by those omens observed in the feverish dreams of the near-death they endured during their watch, interpreted for them by Stormseers, and there were few Khans who would deny the request of one of these ill-omened heroes to stalk the battlefield once more. Those battles to which the Uhaan Solban felt drawn were almost always bound to live in infamy, dire challenges that saw the Legion pitted against near-insurmountable odds or hidden tragedy. Here the Uhaan Solban sought their final demise, to stand as a bulwark against defeat and to laugh bitterly in death's face one last time. The Chondax campaign was to see an unprecedented number of the Uhaan Solban return to the field of battle, an ill-omen that would not be realised until the end of the fighting and the arrival of the Alpha Legion.



Most Khans also nominated one among their Brotherhood as first officer, and heir to command should he fall. A position technically titled Kavkhan, though this was only rarely used in the field, the counsel of this first officer also weighed heavily in the command of the Brotherhood. Other officers of more specialised nature, such as the Tenri-khan that captained many of the void craft of the White Scars fleet or the Gan-khan that presided over the Legion's armouries, as well as veterans of established skill and honour, also held much sway with a wise Khan, and when included as a part of his Brotherhood or larger force, would be key to shaping his decisions.

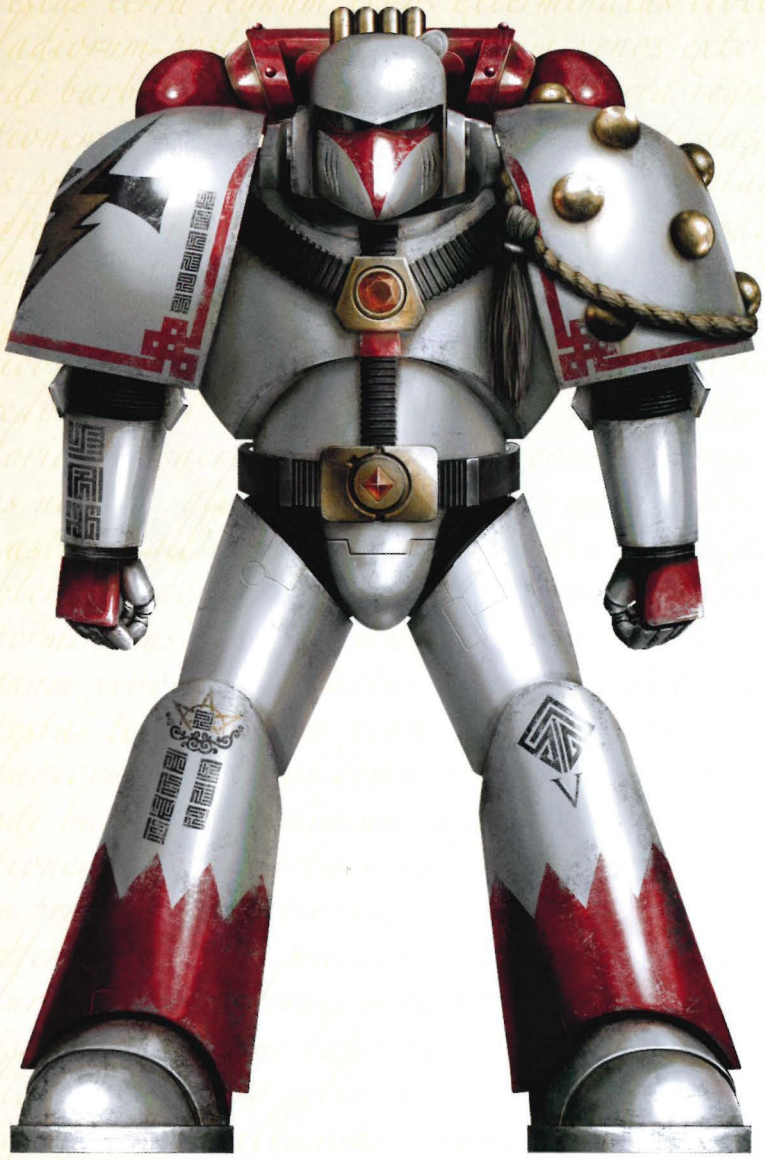
War Disposition

The White Scars were never considered to be among the larger of the Legiones Astartes, partly due to the tendency of its separate detachments to operate individually and the relatively low level of recruitment conducted by the Legion. In its early years, before the rediscovery of Jaghatai Khan, the Legion numbered around 80,000 warriors. By the later years of the Great Crusade, after the return of Jaghatai Khan, this number had risen to around 95,000 warriors. This left the Legion as one of the smallest of the Legiones Astartes, although slightly larger than Corax's Raven Guard and Vulkan's Salamanders, as well as one of the most widely spread on a strategic level. Of all of the Legions, only the Iron Warriors had more of its number attached to fleets and garrison posts than the White Scars. During the Great Crusade, and for much of the Horus Heresy, the exact size of the Vth Legion was often difficult to ascertain, due to the lax attitude many of its commanders held towards the filing of accurate and regular reports with the Divisio Militaris. Those numbers available to us in these latter years are mainly drawn from the personal journals of various Khans and other officers of the Legion, and were not generally known in those last few years before Horus declared war on his father. As such, many of the Imperium's commanders



often believed the White Scars to be a much larger force than it actually was, a fiction mostly attributed to the tendency of the Legion's various detachments to move from war zone to war zone as they willed, and the often confusing heraldry used by many of the Brotherhoods.

During the final stages of the Great Crusade, in the years just before the Isstvan massacres, the White Scars were spread across the galaxy in several dozen war zones, often in detachments of only a few Brotherhoods. At Ullanor, Horus called upon the Great Khan and his warriors, gathering several full Hordes of the Vth Legion and their Primarch to his side – the largest concentration of the Legion at a single war zone since the Kolarne Circle campaign. Following the fighting at Ullanor, those Hordes that had been present, along with several others previously assigned to fighting in the southern fringes of the Great Crusade, were committed to the Chondax Cleansing and were later involved in the Alpha Legion's treacherous assault against the White Scars. This left at least three Hordes unaccounted for in the first years of the Horus Heresy, most assigned to fleets along the north-eastern edge of the Great Crusade and far removed from contact with their Primarch. It appears that most of the Traitor detachments in this region were under orders to avoid engaging remnant White Scars forces, and in at least one incident, a Legiones Astartes force in White Scars colours is known to have fought alongside a Sons of Horus battle force in campaigns targeting Blood Angels' and Ultramarines' holdouts along the Eastern Fringe. Following the Chondax Engagement, there are few concrete facts regarding the main body of the White Scars and their movements are little known in the years that preceded the Battle for Terra.



White Scars Tactical Legionary

Legionary Yeke Nidun, Qara Vachir's Tactical Squad, Brotherhood of the Golden Star

Legionary Nidun bears a common example of the later White Scars heraldry pattern, as typified by the absence of more standard identification markings other than the Legion emblem on his pauldron. Instead of the approved Divisio Militaris icons, the White Scars made use of a complex set of glyphs and icons of their own, mostly derived from the culture of Chogoris and largely indecipherable to their allies. As an example, the right greave of Legionary Nidun's newly issued MkVI power armour bears the emblem of his Brotherhood, a formation roughly analogous to the more standard company, as well as marks indicating his rank, specialisation and commanding officer. These are mostly recorded in the complex glyphs of Chogoris, though other icons are simply modified versions of more standard icons, such as the altered Tactical symbol on the left greave.

As noted by the glyphs adorning his forearm and pauldron, Legionary Nidun is a veteran of a number of campaigns, having fought with the Golden Star for 27 years prior to the fighting at Chondax. Of these campaigns the most infamous is the disastrous drop assault of Anthalmax, where the Golden Star and its Khan won renown holding the landing grounds alone for six hours as the Iron Warriors fought to establish beachhead fortifications. Nidun himself claimed 18 confirmed kills over the course of the engagement, receiving honours from both his Khan and the Iron Warriors commander in the field.

White Scars Heraldry

Brotherhood banner of the Brotherhood of the Golden Star – Note the style of banner pole and curved design which differs from the standard Legion banners. The Chogorian symbols shown on the lower section list the most renowned battle honours of the Brotherhood, later modified to include the names Chondax and Byfrust.

Brotherhood banner of the Brotherhood of the Black Axe – Shown here prior to the fighting in the Chondax system where this banner was captured by the Alpha Legion. Here the Chogorian inscription along the trim lists the various Khans of the Brotherhood.

This MkIII pauldron shows a variant of the Tactical insignia worn by line infantry units within the White Scars.

Another variation on the Tactical insignia, this time shown on a MkIV pauldron.

Light recon plate displaying the icon of the Falcon's Claws, a specialised formation within the ranks of the White Scars.

A pauldron from the ceremonial armour of the Karaoghlanlar, as the Destroyer Corps of the White Scars was known.

Shown here is one of several common honour markings, this example denoting Veteran status within the Legion.

Honour marking, incorporating elements of the Imperial Aquila and worn by veterans of the Unification War.

MkII pauldron displaying a ritual marking linked to the Stormseer Council.

'Standard' pattern of heraldry to be applied to newly issued MkVI armour. In practise this was rarely adhered to.

On this pauldron, the standard pattern Legion icon has been replaced with the Brotherhood of the Gold Star emblem.

This MkIV pauldron bears the mark of the Brotherhood of the Sable Wolf, as well as a brief passage in Chogorian script.

MkVI armour issued to the White Scars prior to their departure for Chondax, emblazoned with Black Axe.

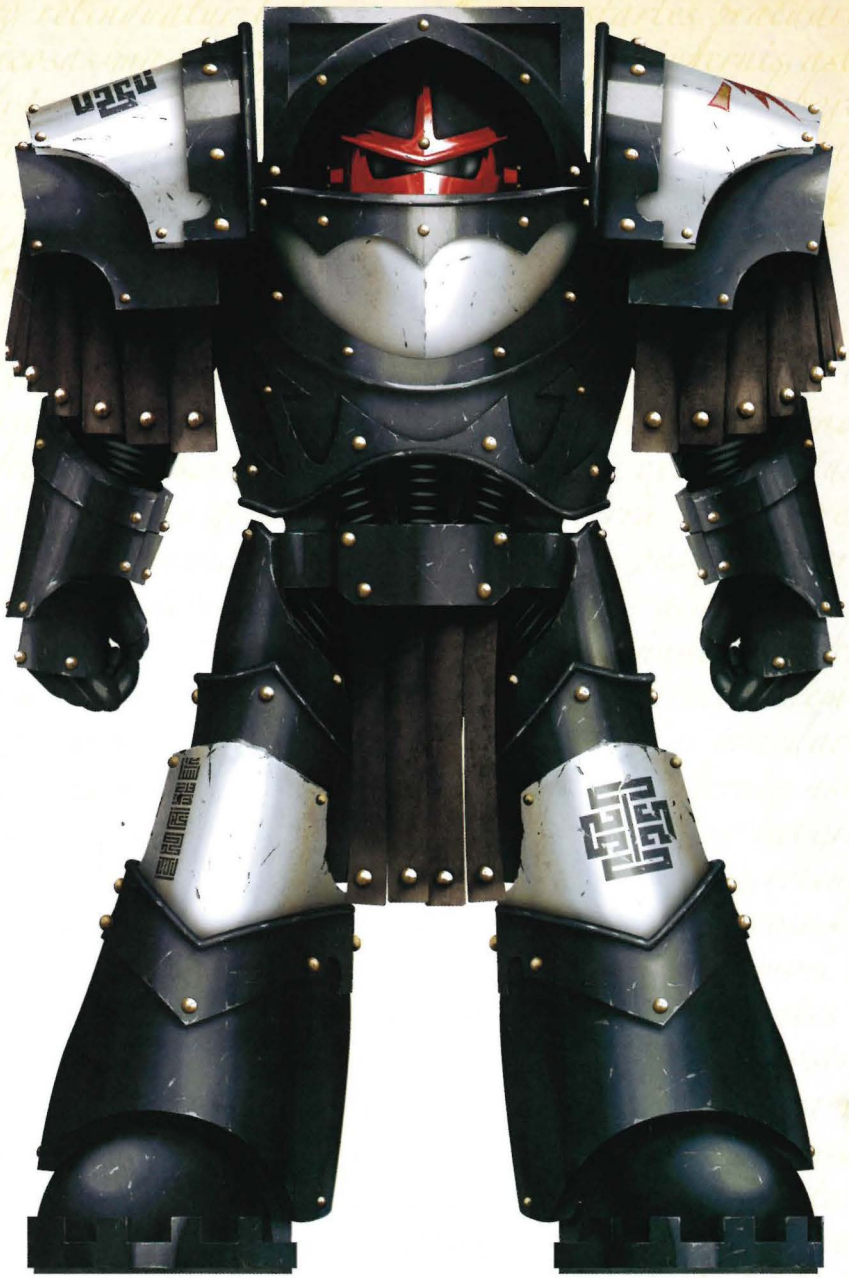
Assault doctrine emblem and insignia of the Brotherhood of the Blue Hawk.

White Scars Veteran Legionary

Legionary Alekh Daumas, 2nd Stalker Cadre, 731st Pioneer Company

Known informally as the Grey Ghosts, the 731st Pioneer Company primarily saw service as outriders and forward scout elements for the 98th Expeditionary Fleet, alongside the warriors of Primarch Rogal Dorn's Imperial Fists Legion. They were tasked with identifying potential targets ahead of the fleet's main advance and assessing the threat of each, either withdrawing in the face of overwhelming opposition or staging a campaign of disruption and subtle murder where they discovered weakness. They served to arrange the grand battles and campaigns which the Imperial Fists prosecuted, moving on when the warriors of Dorn arrived in orbit to secure the victory with pomp and fanfare. The *Cold Shroud* and *Sorrow Vector*, the two cruisers attached to the 731st Pioneer Company, were ever on the move, perpetually steered from one desolate war zone to another by the advance of the Great Crusade.

Legionary Daumas fought as one of the so-called 'Stalker' cadres for which the Grey Ghosts were renowned. Armed with old-pattern anti-materiel rifles converted for use as sniper weapons and a sophisticated catalogue of camouflage techniques, these Stalkers marked priority targets for the invasion force that followed on their heels and perpetrated pinpoint strikes on those deemed vulnerable by the Pioneer Company's commanders. Legionary Daumas rose to prominence during the initial foray on Altus-coriola, where he and his cadre were responsible for destroying 34 grounded fighter craft, ensuring minimal losses in the later Imperial Fists drop assault. Later fully initiated into the reborn White Scars Legion, Daumas took the name Munokhoi to show his loyalty to the Great Khan.



White Scars Terminator

Legionary Surentai, The Ebon Keshig, Kharash of the Siege of Black-blight

This pict shows one of the Tactical Dreadnought Armours of the Vth Legion in the field, a rare occurrence within a Legion dedicated to speed and finesse over brute force. The black heraldry denotes this armour as one of those that formed the Ebon Keshig, in this case the Cataphractii pattern armour pictured bears the title Monqara Erden, which can be roughly translated from the Chogorian tongue to read as '*Eternal dark jewel*'. The majority of the Vth Legion's Terminator armour suits were assigned to the vaults of the Ebon Keshig, waiting until the Legion had need of their stolid might and then temporarily assigned to a warrior for one glorious battle before returning to the storage vaults. Many of these black-painted armour suits had accrued a long and bloody history of last stands and forlorn assaults into the teeth of the enemy's guns.

Legionary Surentai served with the Brotherhood of the Sable Wolf's line infantry before the assault on Black-blight, a warrior of proven mettle but little distinction. He was one of many who volunteered to fight as one of the Ebon Keshig when the Great Khan called for the formation of a Kharash, the name by which individual iterations of the Ebon Keshig were known. Assigned the armour Monqara Erden, Surentai would claim a high tally of enemy dead and was gravely wounded in the prosecution of the assault. Lauded for his bravery by the Khan himself, Surentai returned to the ranks of his Brotherhood as Kavkhan, marked for glory by his deeds as one of the Ebon Keshig.

Exemplary Battles

The achievements of the White Scars have often gone unnoticed by others, their battles fought on the far edges of the Great Crusade where few have lingered to observe the heroism they displayed in the name of the Emperor. On the back of their quiet and hidden battle honours was the Great Crusade built, for where other Legions and armies ventured, it is likely that they followed the trails left by the White Scars. These battles were often of a different breed to those lauded by the other Legions, lightning raids and campaigns of hit and run warfare designed to sap the strength of a foe so that others might strike the final blow. Jaghatai Khan and his sons have often been accused of being lacking in the heavy ordnance required of a full Legion, but the White Scars embraced this quirk of their organisation and sought to turn what others saw as flaw into advantage. Speed and strategic manoeuvrability were the cardinal virtues of their campaigns, and flexibility and the ability to adapt to circumstances swiftly were the hallmarks of their finest strategists. They met brute force with emptiness, flowing around the foe to strike at its weakest points before falling back to strike again. Some saw them as unreliable, for they were wont to avoid battle save on ground of their own choosing, but time and time again they would be disregarded and ignored only for their foes and allies alike to find them suddenly present at the heart of battle, ready to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat, laughing as they killed.

The Pale Emperor

The tale of the Pale Emperor is known to very few. No Remembrancers have spun its events into epic stanzas or captured it in lurid pict record, but many among the White Scars speak of it when outsiders make light of the Great Khan's prowess in battle or of the cruel streak that hides behind his smile. Its exact details are lost to the casual embellishment and adaption by the White Scars who spin the tale, but we can divine a truth from the core of it, which remains a constant no matter which of the Brotherhoods recalls the story. In the late years of the Great Crusade, most likely around 980.M30, a force consisting of approximately five Brotherhoods ventured into the wild space at the edges of the Mandragoran Sector. The exact Brotherhoods involved change with each telling, and the nature of the White Scars' record keeping makes it difficult to establish which accounting is correct, but the one fact that never changes is that the Great Khan himself was at their head.

There, at the very edge of known space, where xenos threats lurked in the dark between the stars, the White Scars encountered a handful of worlds sparsely inhabited by a people of Ancient Terran descent, though in the tales of the White Scars they are never named. The first of these worlds they encountered played host to several small cities, and unlike many other human colonies that had weathered the terrors of the Age of Strife, these appeared to have prospered at the edge of space. It was a rare find, a realm of unsullied human genestock whose technology was well-matched to that of the Imperium, but whose small size precluded any extended resistance to the Imperium's authority. Despite the offers of unity and peaceful integration transmitted by the Great Khan, he and his warriors were greeted not as long-lost kin or saviours, but as invaders, and their fleet came under swift attack. Though Jaghatai, a statesman and empire-builder as much as a warrior, had hoped for a peaceful Compliance, he was equally pleased to test his warriors against a worthy foe in honest battle.

The craft that rose from low orbit to meet the sleek White Scars cruisers were sturdy vessels, no doubt hardened from centuries of warring against xenos raiders and corsairs, but they were too few to stand against the dozen Imperium warships that awaited them. Within the space of a few short exchanges of weapons fire they were left aflame and crippled, though in recognition of their

bravery, the Great Khan gave orders to allow them to withdraw. Having secured orbital space, Jaghatai proceeded with a combat drop, with several squadrons of gunships and landing craft descending onto the boreal plains that marked the edge of the world's inhabited zone. Here, several thousand White Scars engaged the enclave's defenders, several hundred warriors clad in huge and ponderous battle plate, studded with heavy-bore cannon and beam arrays, each more like a small tank than a normal warrior. Almost as if by silent mutual agreement, the two sides mustered outside of the clustered towers of the city, neither wishing to see it broken as they fought and, with but a brief pause, gave voice to the deep roar of cannon and the cacophony of clashing blades.

The cumbersome plate of his foes was proof against much of the White Scars' lighter weaponry, no doubt a relic of some lost Dark Age technology, but these forgotten cousins of Terra could not match the White Scars' speed. Where other Legions might have met them head-on, the White Scars vanguard, mounted on Scimitar pattern jetbikes, outflanked and harried their foe, marking weak points in armour joints and power transfer cables as they raced to and fro across the battlefield. By contrast, their enemy advanced in lockstep, trying to maintain a tight formation while their cannon tracked the fleet Legiones Astartes warriors, blasting great craters into the ground in their wake. Manoeuvring in patterns that seemed almost random, the White Scars sought to disrupt their foes' formation and isolate them from the protection of their brethren. Following on the heels of the jetbike-mounted vanguard, the remaining White Scars warriors deployed heavy weapons and armoured vehicles to cripple individual enemy war engines as they were isolated from the main body. As their casualties began to mount, gaps opened up in the protective formation adopted by the hulking battle armour of the foe and the circling White Scars jetbike squadrons were quick to pounce, switching suddenly from a whirling skirmish line to a concentrated wedge aimed at the heart of the enemy formation. At the head of this assault was the Great Khan, the Primarch a match in size and power for these towering war machines and his blade far quicker than the sensor-augurs that guided their weapons. Spurred on by the example of their lord, the White Scars redoubled their efforts and, one by one, the enemy's war machines were isolated and cut down.

In the wake of his victory, the Khagan showed mercy to his foes and left their cities untouched. From among those of his warriors who had acquitted themselves well in the battle, Jaghatai Khan chose three to act as his ambassadors to the enclave's ruler, exemplars of the Primarch's Legion and fitting to carry his words, a symbol of both his respect for a worthy foe and of the strength which backed his pledge. Through these champions he would make the offer he had made so many times before: serve the Emperor and prosper, oppose him and find only ruin. This was war waged as the Great Khan preferred it, the clash of warriors in open and fair battle quickly followed by an honourable surrender, not the prolonged slaughter and utter destruction advocated by some of his brothers. He had ever been more than a simple butcher and general, more a builder of empires than some among his kin.

Within a short span of time, the Great Khan's emissaries were returned to his camp in pieces, slaughtered by the guards of the Pale Emperor who ruled this small realm. His largesse had been repaid with scorn and blood, despite the obvious advantage held by the Legion, who had already proven themselves more than a match for the foe's warriors. Such a callous gesture of foolish and doomed defiance set the Great Khan into a quiet rage, both for the deaths of his warriors and for the acts he was now forced to undertake. That same night, his Legion razed the unnamed city to ruin. They burned and blasted its towers, and hunted down every last inhabitant and put them to the sword. They went from world to world and brought only death and destruction, scorching a path of ashes to the Pale Emperor's throneworld. There, the White Scars took the field of battle against the finest warriors and war engines he could assemble and tore them apart. They smashed down the gilded gates of his palace and killed all within. All except one.

Cornered on the throne he had valued more than the lives of his subjects, the Pale Emperor was the only man left alive in the wake of the White Scars' vengeful assault. Jaghatai Khan confronted him there, armour slick with the blood of the slain and coated in the ashes of his empire. He spoke but a few words to the fallen Emperor, "*You chose this doom. You forced my hand for the sake of your own petty pride. I would like to kill you, to have your blood join that of all the others you have forced me to kill, but I will not. You will remain here and let others know of the price of pride, that we shall not have to sully our blades again.*"

There ends the tale as told by the White Scars, who see it as a testament to the dedication of their Legion and a warning to those who would underestimate their lord. However, an alternative version is also known of, told only rarely and by those Brotherhoods whose ranks comprise the oldest Chogorian recruits. These veterans recite a different end to the tale, a different declaration by Jaghatai Khan to his enemy, one that speaks of a wound long left untended in the Legion and its Primarch.

"*You have chosen the doom I could not. You have chosen pride over servitude. I would like to kill you, for you remind me of my own choices, but I will not. You will remain here so that I will remember the price of pride and why we sully our blades with the slaughter of small emperors.*"

The Emancipation of Drune, 881.M30

By the latter years of the 80os, the Vth Legion had earned itself a reputation for the types of operation for which it would later become most well-known, but not all of its wars were fought in isolation. At Tarel III, Jakor-Tal and Terlaken B3, the Legion fought noted campaigns as part of combined Legiones Astartes Expeditionary forces, and at Arco took its place in the line with the Blood Angels, Ultramarines, Salamanders and Emperor's Children Legions. Indeed, the battle honour 'Arco' would be borne on the banners of all five Legions, including the treacherous sons of Fulgrim, throughout the Horus Heresy and well into the latter age of the Scouring. Another battle honour borne with pride long after the outbreak of the Horus Heresy by Loyalist and Traitor alike was that won at Drune, a lonely, arid world spinward of the Morpheus Rift. At Drune, the greater part of three entire Legions stood together, each headed by their Primarch.

The Compliance of a world that had once been a beacon of civilisation was to be a crowning glory to an otherwise fruitless expedition, and so the Primarchs of all three Legions present – the Sons of Horus, the Death Guard and the White Scars – determined to deliver the Imperial Truth in person. Three entire Legions made planetfall as one, but what transpired when they came to stand before the gates of the world's capital was quite unprecedented in the decades of the Great Crusade. Those gates remained barred, and no reaction to the massing of three Legions before them was forthcoming. His choler rising, Horus raised his mace as to strike the mighty gates, but before he could do so, a word of caution rung out from the

throng of counsellors and attendants. The warning had been voiced by Kulek Senn, a senior Stormseer of the Vth Legion.

"The shadow hangs over this place. The shadow of domination. Only death will sever the strings."

Mortarion counselled Horus to press onwards, discounting the Stormseer's warning, and press onwards Horus did, striking the gates such a resounding blow with his mace that it caused them to buckle inwards and collapse with a billowing cloud of dust. Advancing within the city, a great mass of humanity pressed in from every quarter. The eyes of the occupants were unfocused and vacant, every mouth slack and drooling. Every body was unwashed and stinking and clad in shredded rags, as if the wearer had given no thought to their own bodily wellbeing for many months, perhaps even years.

Once more, Kulek Senn offered his master his warning as the party moved through the streets, this time with increasingly strident concern. Once more, Mortarion heard and sneered his derision of the psyker's arts, but this time the Great Khan interjected, insisting that his brother Horus heed the Stormseer's words. This time, Horus did so. Whatever it was that the Stormseer had detected an echo of before the gates was now evident for all to see. In the heavens above, a churning vortex of unnatural energies was forming, its eye directly above the centre of the city. Aetheric gusts caught the Primarchs' personal banners and the massed bodies finally stirred, a deep, sonorous groan voiced simultaneously from 100,000 throats.

Fighting their way clear, the Primarchs reunited with their gene-sons outside of the city, and in council with the Great Khan's Stormseers they determined that the entire world was under some manner of xenos domination, one born not of physical reality, but of the other-realm of the Warp. Worse still, they counselled that this domination was being exerted upon the human population of Drune via a series of extra-dimensional portals, each centred upon one of the major mesa-top cities. Only by closing these portals, the Stormseers claimed, would the enslavement of Drune be ended.

And so the war to deliver Drune from the yoke of alien domination began. Jaghatai Khan was nominated by Horus as campaign commander. Such a thing was rare indeed, for even though the Emperor's gene-sons fought beneath the same banner and the sundering of their ranks was still decades away, there existed a deep-seated rivalry between many. The wisdom of Lupercal's decision was plain to see, but the Primarch of the Death Guard Legion protested it nonetheless, for Mortarion detested the employment of psykers in any form, for any reason and against any foe. Thus the Death Guard served in the Drune campaign only nominally under the Great Khan's leadership, Mortarion ensuring they remained apart from the other two Legions.

The war would rage for almost six Terran months, the Great Khan utilizing each element of his command as best suited its nature. Jaghatai's own Legion ranged far and wide across the wastes of Drune, striking at concentrations of xenos power identified by his Stormseers. They encountered a range of horrifying creatures of barely definable form, though all had in common bloated bodies that floated on invisible aetheric tides, multiple eyes, thrashing tendrils and the ability to unleash fearsome blasts of warp energy even as they directed wave after wave of sub-human mind-slaves at the Legionaries. The Stormseers proved crucial not just in locating these abominable foes, but in combating them on the field of battle too, for they were able to deaden the psychic domination effect and thus allow their brother Legionaries to engage the xenos puppet-masters and defeat them, albeit not without loss.

At the last, the campaign reached its climax where it had began – at the mesa-top city where the three Primarchs had first encountered the xenos dominators. The closer to the heart of the city the Primarchs advanced, the more potent the psionic waves assaulting them grew, and the more massive and hideous the xenos abominations they encountered. Though a potent force indeed, none can say what harm might have befallen the Primarchs had the White Scars Stormseers not been close at hand to repel the worst of the aliens' psychic counter-assaults. The air itself screamed in torture as the very stuff of reality was stretched to breaking point, the un-light of the Warp glimmering through a million cracks and rents.

Jaghatai, Horus and Mortarion knew that they had reached the centre of the xenos incursion when even they could proceed no further, so powerful were the psionic tides flooding out from the hideously pulsating wound in reality at the very centre of the city. Overhead loomed an archway of the quivering, still-living flesh of what must surely have once been a man. Beneath the archway was a void pulsing with the raw power of the Warp, and from it was emerging a vast and bloated form, a distended central sac replete with thrashing pseudopods and dozens of too-knowing eyes. Voicing an ancient Chogorian curse, the Great Khan swore the behemoth would not establish dominion in his gene-father's realm, and in answer, his brothers took their place on either side while what remained of his depleted Stormseer council formed a loose ring all about, every last iota of their power bent to the task of warding off the behemoth's vile kin.

Scholars of war might ponder what force might test the powers not just of one, but of three of the Emperor's gene-sons, and in the contest that ensued they might find one such possible answer. The behemoth brought to bear an array of weaponry, from whipping, diamond-sharp tentacles to the unrelenting power of its utterly alien will – 10 Stormseers lay dead upon the ground in as many seconds, their minds torn apart by the behemoth's battering ram of psionic domination.

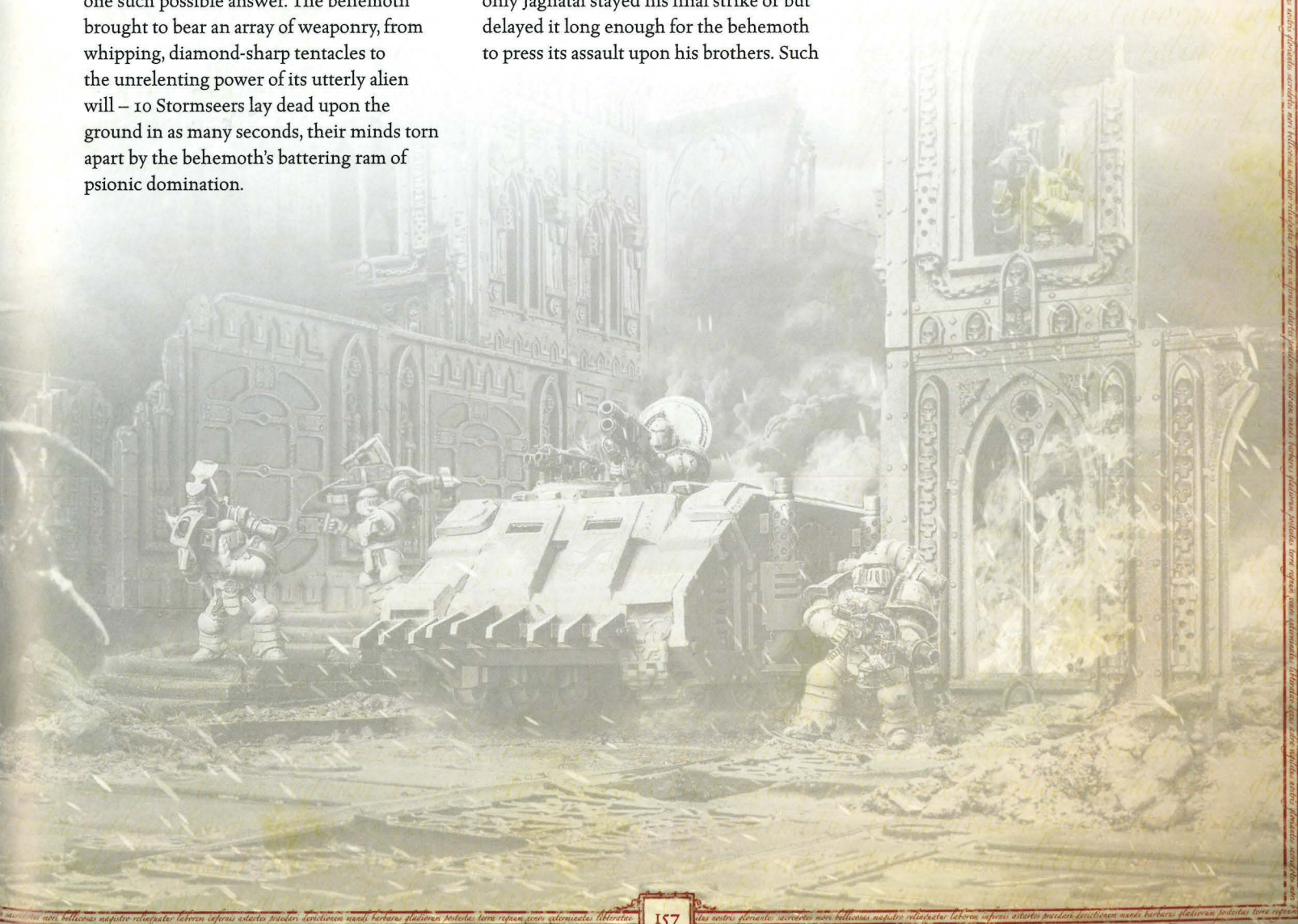
The Primarchs were sorely tested, for while such as they could scarcely know fear, each soon bore a dozen and more hurts. Even the mighty Horus felt the behemoth's mental whip, and though he repelled its will, the effort left blood gushing from his eyes in crimson rivers. Mortarion too struggled against this vile foe, and while his scythe cut through its thrashing tentacles by the dozen, it strove to gain dominion over his mind and to become master of his flesh. As with Horus, the behemoth was unable to batter down Mortarion's defences, but resisting it drove the Death Lord to his very knees.

It was Jaghatai Khan who at the last put an end to the xenos beast. By the combined efforts of his last remaining Stormseers, the Great Khan was rendered unseen to the behemoth, so that even as it concentrated its assault upon Horus and Mortarion, Jaghatai was able to work his way around the creature's vast, bloated form and thereby locate a weak point upon its underside.

There are those of our Order who have indulged themselves with fanciful thoughts of how different latter ages might be had only Jaghatai stayed his final strike or but delayed it long enough for the behemoth to press its assault upon his brothers. Such ponderings are of course futile, and they ignore his essential nature. Jaghatai thrust upwards, spearing some essential node or organ in the behemoth's central mass. It died upon his blade, but the explosion of aetheric force unleashed was very nearly his end too.

It was Horus who saved Jaghatai from being sucked into the now collapsing vortex, Lupercal hauling his brother clear. And thus was the Emancipation of Drune achieved – though not a single one of the world's populace would benefit from the defeat of their alien masters. With the behemoth slain, and the portals through which the aliens had exerted their domination sealed, hundreds of millions of meat-puppets collapsed wherever they were standing, never to rise again.

In truth, such a fate was a mercy for the people of Drune and for the Imperium, for one way or another, they could not have been allowed to live.



The Signus Prime Campaign

How the Signus Prime Campaign Works

The following campaign allows players to recreate the Battle of Signus Prime through a series of games of The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness, with one side representing those deceived by Horus into a war intended to divide the Loyalist forces, and the other side representing the foul creatures of the Warp summoned to draw the deceived under the control of the dark gods. During the campaign, the two sides play through a number of phases, each of which consists of multiple games fought over six War Zones, representing important locations during each stage of the conflict.

Victory in each phase will see players gaining control over certain War Zones, which will grant them bonus special rules to use in the following phase. The overall victor of the campaign is determined by achieving both of the objectives unique to their Faction, as explained later in this section.

The events of this campaign are inspired by the chronicles in this book, which are themselves a development of the novels published as part of Black Library's *The Horus Heresy* series. The campaign itself has been designed for a minimum of two players. However, the number of phases, the number of games per phase and the special missions included in this campaign can easily be adapted for larger gaming groups. For players looking to extend their campaign further, this section also contains a selection of optional rules.

The Battle of Signus Prime is a vital turning point for the Blood Angels Legion and, indeed, in the wider narrative of the Age of Darkness and beyond. Despite this book featuring the documented version of events as they occurred during that fateful battle, this does not and should not determine the outcome of the Signus Prime campaign that you play. If you and your group want to continue the story using your version of events, *The Horus Heresy Book Four – Conquest* provides some excellent ways for taking your campaign further, as the rules for Unique Characters and War Zones would be ideal for building upon the fallout from your campaign.

Designer's Note
When choosing the armies for this campaign, bear in mind that the Battle of Signus Prime takes place approximately at the same time as the betrayal at Isstvan III. Given the chaos and confusion surrounding their arrival in the Signus Cluster, the Blood Angels are not aware of any of the wider events of the Horus Heresy yet. As such, none of the Legions are currently considered Traitors in this campaign (but whether they actually are is a different matter!).

In this case, feel free to use your 'Traitor' forces as Loyalists if you so wish. If you want to play an alternative version of this campaign where your Legion is already known as Traitorous, or your Legion continues to pose as Loyalists to further Warmaster Horus' deception, by all means do so.

If you have played any of the campaigns featured in other Forge World The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness publications, there are many features you will find similar, with the addition of special rules to recreate the battles fought over the various war zones of Signus Prime and the catastrophic events caused by the fall of Sanguinius. While each phase follows the same rules and the structure of the phase is the same across the campaign, the battles fought within each phase are widely varied and can see the tides of battle ebb and flow between both the traditional and non-traditional victors.

At its core, to play this campaign you need two players with armies taken from the various The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness army lists produced by Forge World, but there is no upward limit as to how many players can take part in this campaign. The special missions in this section can easily be adapted for multiple players, and there are no limits on how many games can be played per phase, so large gaming groups can easily run a widespread campaign. Generally, you should aim for an equal number of players on each side as it will be easier to arrange games, but if this cannot be achieved, it simply means that some players may have to play more games in each phase across the course of the campaign.

It is worth noting that campaigns involving more players will require a greater amount of terrain, gaming space and player dedication to bring the campaign to a satisfactory conclusion. If you do have a large number of players, it is worth having one person act as referee and organiser rather than player to impartially record results between sessions. Of course, players should always support them by providing them with all the information they require for bookkeeping promptly, not to mention thank them for their hard work and dedication at the end of the campaign!

The Armies

Each player should draw their armies from the most recent versions of The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness army lists. Ideally, these should reflect the forces present at the Battle of Signus Prime: the Blood Angels Legion, the Daemons of the Ruinstorm, the Space Wolves Legion, the Legio Custodes and the Word Bearers Legion.

Before the campaign begins, you should decide between yourselves how strict you wish to be in regards to taking armies other than the ones presented in this book. The only restriction to other armies in terms of the campaign system is that they should take the Allied Detachments, units and unique characters available to that army. You may decide you wish to play an alternative version of the Battle of Signus Prime, or even decide to adapt it for a completely different setting. While this may take more work, it will make the campaign unique to your gaming group and will ultimately be worth the extra work put in by those involved.

The missions in the campaign will refer to one Faction as the Waylaid, and the other the Baleful. In historical terms, the Blood Angels, Space Wolves and Legio Custodes would be the Waylaid, while the Daemons of the Ruinstorm and the Word Bearers would be the Baleful. However, this should not stop you playing otherwise if you so wish. Before the game begins, you should decide which side your army will play for the rest of the game. If you want to change sides you may – however, this should only be done once per player where possible to make the game fair for all parties involved.

Rules in this campaign will refer to Factions holding control of War Zones, and Factions gaining special rules. Regardless of if there is one player in each Faction or many, all players within that Faction gain the bonuses listed in the campaign rules for that Faction.

Heroes of Signus Prime

The Battle of Signus Prime takes place across a wide battlefield that consists of various linked War Zones. With battles occurring simultaneously and various forces performing independently to others, Primarchs and other named characters should only be used once per phase – they can't be everywhere at once!

This campaign is intended to represent the monumental consequences from the battle on Signus Prime. Therefore, it is recommended that you use Sanguinius and Ka'bandha as your Faction's Heroes in this campaign. However, if you wish you may nominate another Independent Character to be your Faction's Hero in this campaign. Before the campaign begins, you must declare which Independent Character – one from each Faction – will be used as the Faction's Hero for the duration of this campaign. In any game in which a Faction's Hero is taken, they must be that army's Warlord.

Campaign Duration

Each campaign may last until an agreed number of phases have been played, or an agreed amount of time has passed. Similarly, each campaign phase may last until an agreed number of games have been played, or an agreed amount of time has passed.

In each campaign phase, once the agreed amount of time has passed or the agreed number of games have been played, the phase ends and the victories and draws are totalled up per War Zone to determine who controls each War Zone. The following phase then begins.

The number of phases and duration of the phase must be agreed upon before the campaign begins and kept as constant as possible throughout. Depending on the group's preferences you may play as many games per phase as you wish, and similarly you may set the number of phases per campaign as high or low as you like.

When setting a maximum duration for the campaign, a good place to start is how many games you want to play per phase. For instance, if your group wants to play five games per phase, and think they can comfortably manage five games over two weeks, then set the time limit for the phase as five games or two weeks, whichever comes first. Once you know how long you want each phase to last, you can then set the number of phases per campaign. Continuing with the example above, if your group typically plays a campaign over twelve weeks, you know your group can commit to six phases during the campaign. This gives your campaign an overall time limit of twelve weeks. Having a time limit keeps the campaign moving forward and gives the phase a definite 'end', which can help to keep the players motivated and interested.

For example: A group of 10 friends want to play the Signus Prime campaign. As they meet once a week, they reckon they can comfortably play five games each time they meet, so they set the phase duration as five games, or a week. With the campaign moving at a quick pace they want to commit to more phases across the campaign, so they decide as a group to commit to 10 phases, giving them 10 weeks for the campaign.

On their first regular gaming night they play the full five games, which constitutes the whole of the first phase. In the second phase, however, the group only manages to play three games by the end of the allotted time and the second phase ends.

The Campaign Phase

Each campaign phase follows the same structure, as outlined below:

The Muster

- Before each game, both sides roll a D6. The winner decides which War Zone they wish to play in.
- A Faction may challenge any War Zone adjacent to one they control (see the Signus Campaign map on page 164). At the beginning of the campaign, each Faction controls only their home War Zone.

The Battle

- Choose a mission to use for your game, unless there are special missions in use in the War Zone you have committed a game to (see page 166).
- Set up the game as per the mission rules, while taking into account the special game rules given for that War Zone.

The Consolidation

- Once all of the games in this campaign phase have been played, the Faction with the most victories in a War Zone gains control of the War Zone for the next phase, affording them special rules they can use while they control this War Zone.
- If no games have been played in a War Zone in this phase, the Faction that controlled that War Zone continues to control it in the next phase. If no Faction controls that War Zone, it remains uncontrolled in the next phase.
- If a battle was played in the Cathedral of the Mark or the Wreck of the Red Tear War Zones, the War Zone is not controlled until its defences have been destroyed – follow the rules for those War Zones on page 166.
- The results of these games are made available to the gaming group through the campaign organiser, and the campaign map is updated to show which Faction controls which War Zone in the next phase.

Missions in the Signus Prime Campaign

When not otherwise specified by a particular War Zone, players are free to use any of the missions from *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook* in this campaign, or if you wish to adapt missions from previous campaigns from Forge World's *The Horus Heresy* books, we encourage you to do so. Additionally, if the opposing Faction controls your home War Zone, you must play the Where Angels Would Die mission in that War Zone. In this case, your Faction's Hero may be used in more than one battle in this phase.

Victory Points

For the majority of missions in this campaign, victory is determined by how many Victory points each player has at the end of the game. It is therefore worth keeping a record of the Victory points you earn across each phase, particularly if you are playing as part of a team, as this can be used to determine who earns fame (or infamy) at the end of the campaign.

How to win the Campaign

To win the campaign, each Faction must achieve both of the objectives listed for them below.

Waylaid Objectives

The Waylaid must slay Ka'bandha and control the Cathedral of the Mark.

Baleful Objectives

The Baleful must slay Sanguinius and control the Wreck of the *Red Tear*.

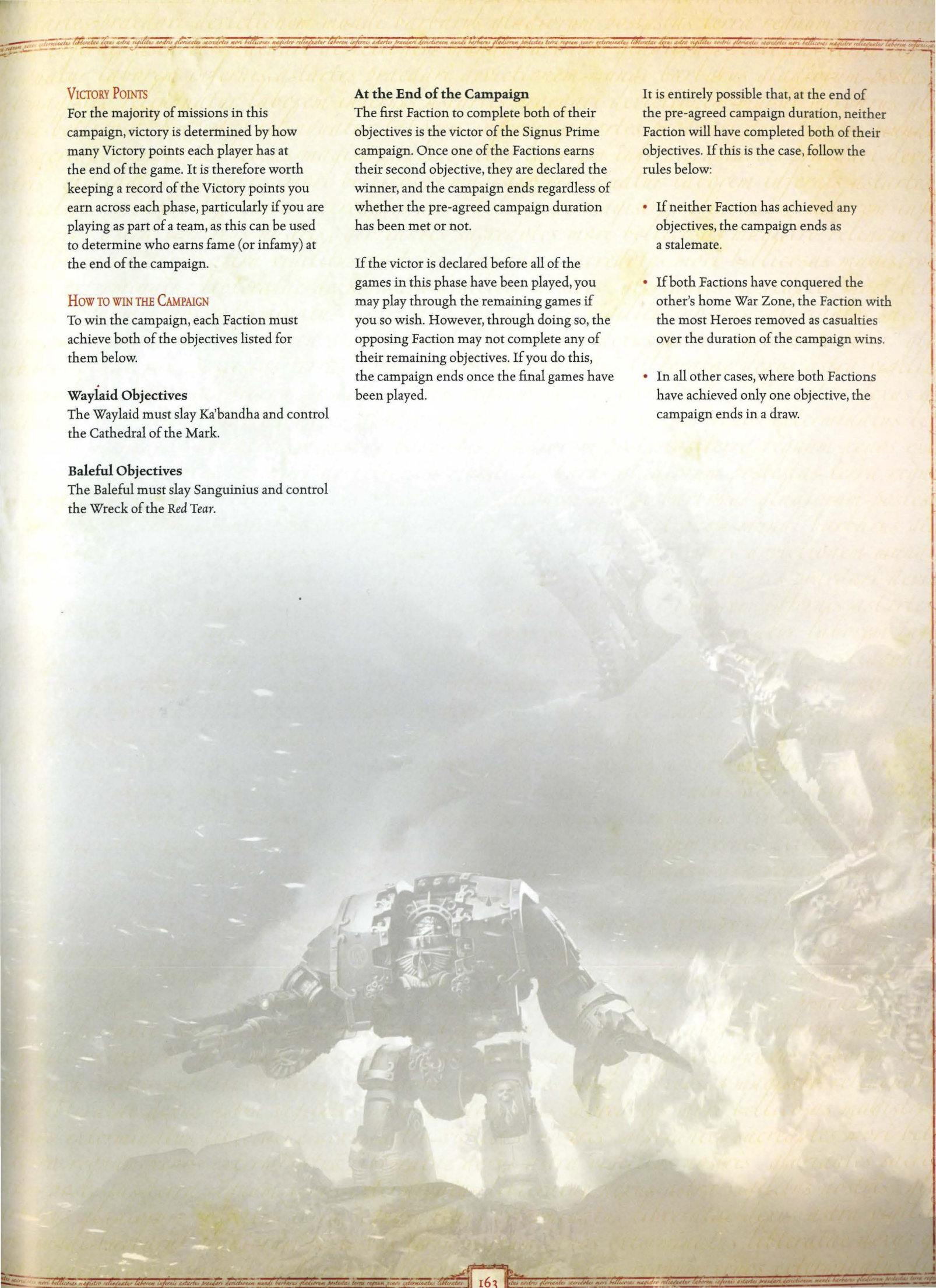
At the End of the Campaign

The first Faction to complete both of their objectives is the victor of the Signus Prime campaign. Once one of the Factions earns their second objective, they are declared the winner, and the campaign ends regardless of whether the pre-agreed campaign duration has been met or not.

If the victor is declared before all of the games in this phase have been played, you may play through the remaining games if you so wish. However, through doing so, the opposing Faction may not complete any of their remaining objectives. If you do this, the campaign ends once the final games have been played.

It is entirely possible that, at the end of the pre-agreed campaign duration, neither Faction will have completed both of their objectives. If this is the case, follow the rules below:

- If neither Faction has achieved any objectives, the campaign ends as a stalemate.
- If both Factions have conquered the other's home War Zone, the Faction with the most Heroes removed as casualties over the duration of the campaign wins.
- In all other cases, where both Factions have achieved only one objective, the campaign ends in a draw.



++ Twisted Forest ++

++ Warped Plains

++ Cathedral of the Mark ++

++ Warped Hills ++

Campaign Special Rules

War Zones

The battlefield of Signus Prime was not only varied in its terrain and ecosystem, but control over its various zones became key in latter stages of the campaign. As such, each War Zone has its own special rules for missions played in it, as well as conveying special rules to the player who controls it in each phase. These special rules are presented below and relate to the campaign map on page 164.

The paths on the map refer to routes of attack that are available to each Faction when they control a War Zone. Only once a Faction controls a War Zone do the routes of attack from that War Zone allow them access to other War Zones.

Twisted Forest

Almost all life in the Twisted Forest is dead, save for only the hardiest of flora that has been mutated by the Warp's touch. The trees are blackened and cracked, their spiny branches and shattered trunks blocking out the ethereal colours of the void above.

When playing games in this War Zone, use the following special rule:

Corrupted Undergrowth: *The taint of the Warp has spread into the ecosystem of Signus Prime, accelerating the growth of the various vines and mosses that live upon the forest floor.*

At the start of every turn after the first turn, randomly select three pieces of terrain on the table. For each piece of terrain, roll a Scatter dice and a D3, moving that piece of terrain that number of inches in the direction shown on the Scatter dice. If a Hit! is rolled, the terrain does not move.

If the terrain would move over where a unit is currently, that unit takes two Str 5 AP 5 hits, and the terrain stops 1" away from that unit. If the terrain would move over where more than one unit is then each unit takes two Str 5 AP 5 hits, and the terrain must stop at least 1" away from each unit.

The Faction that controls the Twisted Forest War Zone at the beginning of the phase gains the following special rule:

Area Denial: *Both the baleful forces of the Warp and the waylaid Imperium forces understood the importance of controlling the flow of reinforcements into the large open plains at the heart of the battlefield. Through controlling one of these flanking routes, a skilful commander could quickly come to dictate the tide of battle.*

During games played in the Warped Hills, Warped Plains, Wreck of the Red Tear or Cathedral of the Mark War Zones, after both armies have deployed but before the first turn begins, choose a table edge. If an enemy unit attempts to Outflank from that table edge, in your next turn one of your Infantry or Character units that are currently in Reserve may be placed on the table from that table edge without needing to roll.

Warped Hills and Warped Plains

The ground of the Warped Hills and Warped Plains appears to move and shift at random, the terrain mutating as quick as one would adapt to it.

When playing games in these War Zones, use the following special rule:

Tendrils of Corruption: *The ground itself is tainted by the foul presence of the Warp, and the mere existence of its creations only defiles it further.*

At the start of each game turn, roll a D6 on the table below.

The Faction that controls both the Warped Hills and Warped Plains War Zones at the start of a campaign phase gains the following special rule:

D6	Effect
1	**Water-logged Pit:** Randomly select one area of difficult terrain on the table. For the next game turn it becomes dangerous terrain.
2	**Earthquake:** Each player places one Small Blast (3") marker each on the table and rolls to scatter. For the next game turn, the area under each Blast marker is considered difficult terrain. If this area, either fully or partially, is already difficult terrain, it becomes dangerous terrain. Similarly, if the area under the marker is already dangerous terrain, it becomes impassable terrain. This rule has no effect on terrain that is already impassable.
3	**Tar Pit Eruption:** The player who took the first turn places a Large Blast (5") marker over an empty part of the table. Roll to scatter. The area under the Large Blast (5") marker is considered dangerous terrain for the next game turn. If the area under the marker is already dangerous terrain, whether fully or partially, it becomes impassable terrain. This rule has no effect on terrain that is already impassable.
4	**Landslide:** Roll a Scatter dice anywhere on the board. Place the tip of a teardrop-shaped template (8" in length) at the centre of where the Scatter dice lands, and place the wide end in the direction the Scatter dice points, or a direction of the Baleful player's choice if it lands on a Hit. Any units covered by the template take three Str 5 AP - hits.
5	**Lava Geyser Cluster:** Each player places one Large Blast (5") marker on the table and rolls to scatter. For the next two game turns, the area under each marker is considered dangerous terrain. If the area under the marker is already dangerous terrain, whether fully or partially, it becomes impassable terrain. This rule has no effect on terrain that is already impassable.
6	**Sinkhole Cluster:** The player who took the second turn places three Small Blast (3") markers next to each other. Roll to scatter each of them separately. Any unit under a marker takes six Str 6 AP 4 hits and for the rest of the game, the area under the markers is considered impassable terrain. If there are any models remaining under the Blast markers after the hits have been resolved, in their next Movement phase they must move outside of the marker and may not move any further.

Central Assault: *Though a beachhead here would quickly be overwhelmed, holding the central area of the battlefield would be key in assaulting the Cathedral of the Mark. Similarly, the baleful forces of the Warp could use this ground as a direct route of assault to the Wreck of the Red Tear, making winning battles in this war zone of the upmost importance.*

When playing games in any other War Zone on the campaign map, you may either automatically bring on one unit that is held in Reserve once per game on turn 1, or re-roll all failed Reserve rolls for the whole game. You must decide which version of this rule you will be using before the game begins.

Ruined Spires

Craggy and unstable, the mountainous areas of Signus Prime were destabilised even further by the foul machinations of the Warp, leaving even the most deep-rooted rock formations at risk of total collapse.

When playing games in the Ruined Spires War Zone, use the special rule below:

Unstable Ground: *The rock underfoot is shattered and splintered, making the mountain passes treacherous at best for passing troops on foot, tracked vehicles and cavalry.*

When rolling To Hit during the Shooting phase, put aside any dice that miss for all of the weapons fired from that unit. After resolving the shooting attack for that unit, re-roll those 'missed' dice. On the roll of a 6, the unit you attacked takes an additional Str 4 AP 5 hit. If you roll more than three results of a 6, place a Small Blast (3") marker over the unit you attacked – for each model underneath the blast template, that unit takes a Str 4 AP 5 hit.

The Faction that controls the Ruined Spires War Zone at the start of a campaign phase gains the following special rule:

Fire Support: *The vantage point offered by these towering spires was pivotal to either side should they wish to assault the other's base of command. Long-ranged artillery could easily draw lines of fire across most of the battlefield from the tallest mesas; ambushes and advances could quickly be spotted before they happened and controlling these peaks gave a direct route of assault towards the enemy's seat of power.*

When playing games set in the Wreck of the Red Tear, Cathedral of the Mark or Warped Hills and Warped Plains War Zones, select one of the long table edges. Once per game, pick one Heavy weapon on one of the units you currently hold in Reserve. You may fire this weapon at any point from the long table edge you have selected at an enemy unit up to 12" away from that table edge, regardless of the heavy weapon's true range. If you do so, the unit with the weapon that was just fired suffers -1 to their Reserves roll next turn.

Wreck of the Red Tear

The Wreck of the Red Tear is the War Zone around the crash-landed starship, the *Red Tear*. Unlike other War Zones, this one is controlled by the Waylaid by default, until the Baleful remove all three of the War Zone's defensive traits as outlined in the special mission for this War Zone. This is the home War Zone for the Waylaid Faction.

> When fighting battles in the Wreck of the Red Tear War Zone, use the Gilded Wreck special mission (see page 172).

As shown on the Signus Prime Campaign map, the Baleful may only play games in the Wreck of the Red Tear War Zone if they control a continuous chain of War Zones from the Cathedral of the Mark at the start of a phase.

While the Waylaid control the Wreck of the Red Tear, they have the following special rule:

Hope Yet Remains: *Though the Blood Angels are surrounded and stranded, not all hope is lost for Signus Prime.*

Once per game, a Waylaid unit may Regroup regardless of casualties, without rolling for Leadership.

While the Baleful control the Wreck of the Red Tear, use the following special rule:

Hazy Recollections: *Their vision clouded by ethereal fog, the waylaid forces are at risk of being outflanked by the enemy. With no way of knowing where the enemy is within the unnatural miasma, those stranded on Signus Prime are quickly losing control.*

If a Waylaid unit attempts to make a Sweeping Advance, they count their Initiative as being 1 lower than it actually is.

Cathedral of the Mark

The Cathedral of the Mark is the War Zone within the corrupted centre of the daemonic invasion of Signus Prime. Unlike other war zones, this War Zone is controlled by the Baleful by default, until the Waylaid remove all three of the War Zone's defensive traits as outlined in the special mission for this War Zone. This is the home War Zone for the Baleful Faction.

> When fighting battles in the Cathedral of the Mark War Zone, use the special mission Warp Conduit (see page 174).

As shown on the Signus Prime campaign map, the Waylaid may only play games in the Cathedral of the Mark War Zone if they control a continuous chain of War Zones from the Wreck of the Red Tear at the start of a phase.

While the Baleful control the Cathedral of the Mark, they have the following special rule:

Central Spire: *The highest concentration of warp energy can be found here, which invigorates all attuned to it.*

The Baleful player may choose to re-roll failed Leadership tests.

While the Waylaid control the Cathedral of the Mark, use the following special rule:

Sealing the Rupture: *Unable to reach the centre of their power, the creatures of the Warp fall apart, losing all cohesion and reverting to their base instincts.*

All Baleful Faction units suffer -1 to their Leadership value.

The Fall of Sanguinius

To win the campaign, the Baleful Faction must slay Sanguinius. However, killing a noble Primarch such as Sanguinius is no easy feat, and it will take more than a horde of foul beasts of the Warp to destroy him. As such, Sanguinius must be removed as a casualty four times during the course of this campaign for the Baleful player to claim this objective.

To kill Sanguinius, the Baleful Faction must progress through the results opposite. Each progression correlates to the number of times Sanguinius has been removed as a casualty during a game in this campaign. These results are cumulative. If Sanguinius is slain in close combat with Ka'bandha, he is considered as having been removed as a casualty twice for the purposes of this rule. If you cannot progress further down the table (i.e., Sanguinius is removed as a casualty for a fourth time), Sanguinius has been slain for good and may not be used for the rest of the campaign.

The first time Sanguinius is removed as a casualty, he suffers a **Deep Wound:** For the rest of the campaign, Sanguinius' Wounds characteristic is reduced by 1. The opponent gains +3 Victory points in this game only.

The second time Sanguinius is removed as a casualty, he is **Bleeding Out:** For the rest of the campaign, one of Sanguinius' following characteristics are reduced. Roll a D3; on a 1, his Strength is reduced by 1, on a 2, his Toughness is reduced by 1, on a 3, his Attacks are reduced by 1.

The third time Sanguinius is removed as a casualty, he is **Pinioned:** For the rest of the campaign, Sanguinius loses the Great Wings special rule, and his unit type is changed to Infantry (Character). Sanguinius may not regain the use of his Great Wings by any means.

If Sanguinius is removed as a casualty for a fourth time, the Blood Angels player gains the following special rule:

Dark Bloodlust: *With the fall of their Primarch and the butchering of their Legion, the Blood Angels are consumed by a dark bloodlust.*

Until the end of the campaign, any unit with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule gains the Rage special rule.

Designer's Note

These rules were written with the assumption that the Waylaid Faction would contain a Blood Angels army. However, if this is not the case for your gaming group, you can adapt these rules to nominate a Hero to take the place of Sanguinius. Your Hero can be any Independent Character model which players in the Faction agree to use.

Your Unique Character will not necessarily share rules with Sanguinius, so if the Pinioned effect does not apply to your Unique Character, replace it with the following special rule:

Hamstrung: For the rest of the campaign, your Unique Character reduces their Leadership by 2.

In addition, if the Waylaid are not using a Blood Angels army, change the Dark Bloodlust special rule to read:

Infuriated: Until the end of the campaign, the [ARMY]* gains the Rage special rule.

**Replace* [ARMY] *with the army from which the Hero was drawn.*

The Fall of Ka'bandha

To win the campaign, the Waylaid Faction must slay Ka'bandha. However, killing a gargantuan force such as Ka'bandha is no easy feat, and it will take more than the Legionaries of the Imperium to destroy it. As such, Ka'bandha must be removed as a casualty four times during the course of this campaign for the Waylaid player to claim this objective.

To kill Ka'bandha, the Waylaid Faction must progress through the results opposite. Each progression correlates to the number of times Ka'bandha has been removed as a casualty during a game in this campaign. These results are cumulative. If Ka'bandha is slain in close combat with Sanguinius, it is considered as having been removed as a casualty twice for the purposes of this rule. If you cannot progress further down the table (i.e. Ka'bandha is removed as a casualty for a fourth time), Ka'bandha has been slain for good and may not be used for the rest of the campaign.

The first time Ka'bandha is removed as a casualty, it suffers from **Warp Dissonance:** For the rest of the campaign, Ka'bandha's Leadership characteristic is reduced by 3.

The second time Ka'bandha is removed as a casualty, it is **Disfavoured:** For the rest of the campaign, when Ka'bandha takes a Perils of the Warp test, always subtract 1 from the result.

The third time Ka'bandha is removed as a casualty, it suffers from **Shredded Wings**: For the rest of the campaign, Ka'bandha loses the use of its wings. Change its unit type to Monstrous Creature (Character).

If Ka'bandha is removed as casualty for a fourth time, the Daemons of the Ruinstorm player gains the following special rule:

The Mighty Fall: *As the strongest among them falls, the psychic connection between the lesser Daemons and their overlord is shattered.*

For the rest of the campaign, units within a Daemons of the Ruinstorm Detachment consider the turn number as being one higher for the purposes of the Tides of Madness special rule.

Designer's Note

These rules were written with the assumption that the Baleful Faction would contain a Daemons of the Ruinstorm army. However, if this is not the case for your gaming group, you can adapt these rules to nominate a Hero to take the place of Ka'bandha. Your Hero can be any Independent Character model which players in the Faction agree to use.

Your Unique Character will not necessarily share rules with Ka'bandha, so if the Shredded Wings effect does not apply to your Unique Character, replace it with the following rule:

Shattered: For the rest of the campaign, your Unique Character reduces their Attacks characteristic by 1.

In addition, if the Baleful are not using a Daemons of the Ruinstorm army, change The Mighty Fall rule to read:

Back against the Wall: Until the end of the campaign, the [ARMY]* gains the Counter-attack special rule.

**Replace* [ARMY] *with the army from which the Hero was drawn.*

Warlord and Famed Character Casualties
The fate of heroic warlords as well as famed and infamous characters is a key part of the struggle and epic scale of the Horus Heresy, and such influential figures cannot simply be expended as resources – for no force can expect to succeed in battle without their greatest warriors.

If a player's Warlord and/or any unique named characters* in play are removed as a casualty during a campaign game (including falling back off the table, etc.), the player must roll a D6 for each character at the end of the game. The results as shown in the Warlord and Famed Characters Fatality table that follows apply to the remainder of the player's games in the campaign. If the controlling player was victorious in the game in which the character was removed as a casualty, they may re-roll the result.

If you elect to use this special rule for your campaign, the following table does not apply to your Faction's Heroes, as they have their own table earlier in this section.

**This also refers to any Independent Character that has a unique rules profile in any of the Forge World Horus Heresy army lists.*

Historia Terra Regnum

Warlord and Famed Characters Fatality Table

D6	Result
1-2	**Mortally Wounded:** This character is critically wounded and may not be used again in the next Campaign phase. However, they may be used in later campaign phases unless agreed otherwise. The opposing side gains +2 Victory points in the game this character was removed as a casualty.
3-4	**Shaken:** Your character is shaken by their ill fortune on the battlefield and, in their next game, your character (regardless of who they are) suffers a -1 Leadership penalty until the end of the next Campaign phase.
5+	**Unscathed:** Your character has escaped permanent injury and may be used again in subsequent games without ill effect.

Warp-touched Terrain

Any game played as part of the Signus Prime campaign can use Warp-touched terrain. After setting up the terrain for your game, you may decide that a particularly distinct piece of terrain is considered to be Warp-touched terrain or decide the number of Warp-touched terrain pieces using the following chart:

D6	Result
1	No Warp-touched terrain pieces
2-3	One Warp-touched terrain piece
4-5	Two Warp-touched terrain pieces
6	Three Warp-touched terrain pieces

Generally, it is best to nominate pieces of terrain that are notable in some way for ease of remembering which pieces are considered to be Warp-touched.

If a piece of Warp-touched terrain is area terrain or an open plan building, it is considered explored when a unit enters it. If the building is closed or the terrain is otherwise impassable, it is considered explored if a unit passes within 2" of the terrain.

When the Warp-touched terrain is explored, roll on the following Warp-touched Terrain Type table to determine its effect.

D6	Warp-touched Terrain Type
1	**Oppressive Night:** *Though from the outside nothing seems out of the ordinary, within this area the sky darkens and a thick fog surrounds all who enter, preventing any enhanced vision sensors from operating correctly.* All units within this area of terrain or within 2" of it suffer -1 To Hit during the Shooting phase, and their weapons may only be fired at half range.
2	**Flaming Pit:** *The purple and blue-tinged flames spewing plasma from this pit have been burning since the barrier between the Warp and realspace thinned, being fed by the raw psychic energy of their manifestation.* This area is now considered dangerous terrain if it was not already. All units that end their move within this area, or within 2" of this piece of terrain for any reason suffer D6 Str 3 AP 6 hits. Any Psyker or Daemon that begins their Psychic phase within this area adds 1 to any Perils of the Warp result.
3	**Ultra-low Vibration:** A *low-frequency vibration ripples through the ground in this area, which to the extremely high aural perception of the Legiones Astartes and the Daemons of the Ruinstorm can be incapacitating.* This area is now considered difficult terrain. All units within this area of terrain suffer -1 to their Initiative and Leadership characteristics. If it was already difficult terrain, it becomes dangerous terrain instead.
4	**Unstable Reality:** *The boundaries between the Warp and realspace are so thin here that the entire fabric of reality in this area is warping and mutating.* For each unit that enters this piece of terrain, or passes within 2" of it, roll a Scatter dice and a D3. The unit moves that many inches in the direction indicated on the Scatter dice. If the Scatter dice rolls a Hit!, the unit does not move, but instead gains +1 To Hit in their next Shooting phase.
5	**Spontaneous Combustion:** *Blackened corpses and skeletons litter the ground, though there are no signs of widespread conflagration in the area past where the bodies lie.* For each unit that enters this piece of terrain, or passes within 2" of it, roll a D6. If the number rolled is higher than the current game turn, the unit suffers four Str 5 AP - hits using the Deflagrate special rule.
6	**Time Dilation:** *Time passes slightly faster in this area; those within its bounds witness the outside world as moving slower than themselves.* Each unit within this area may do one of the following: • Move an extra D6" in the Movement phase • Shoot twice with one weapon, • Roll 3D6 when determining their charge distance

Gilded Wreck

'He who lets the galaxy lull them into a false sense of security is a fool!'

Admiral Athene DuCade

The Armies

Choose the armies using The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts.

Setting up the Game

The Waylaid uses deployment zone A, and the Baleful deployment zone B. Models must not be deployed within 12" of each other.

Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers, and place the terrain on the battlefield. The Gilded Wreck mission takes place around the wrecked hull of the *Red Tear*, so there should be rubble, ruined buildings, craters and furrows in the ground scattered across the table.

Deployment

- Roll off. The winner may choose to deploy first or second.
- The player who deploys first deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units placed in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- The player who is deploying second then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units placed in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc., are as found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*.

Before the game begins, the Waylaid player selects one of the table's long edges – for the remainder of the game, this edge represents the hull of the *Red Tear*.

First Turn

The Waylaid have the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*).

Game Length

This mission lasts for six turns. At the end of turn six, roll a D6. On a 5+, a seventh and final turn is played.

Victory Conditions

This mission's victory conditions are achieved by the destruction of the enemy's fighting strength, scattering their forces further across the battlefield of Signus Prime. At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory points has won the game. If players have the same number of Victory points, the game is a draw.

Primary Objective

The Baleful must have more units in the Waylaid deployment zone than their opponent does to claim victory. Any other outcome results in a Waylaid victory.

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord, First Blood, Last Man Standing

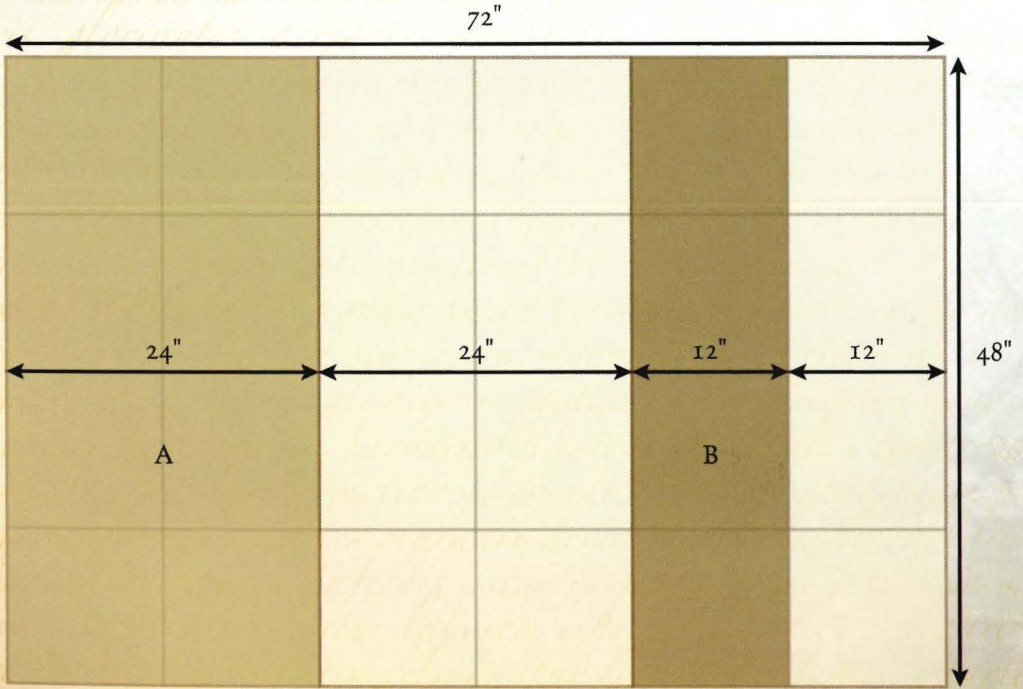
Mission Special Rules

- **Reserves** (*see The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*)

Defensive Traits

To take control of the Wreck of the Red Tear War Zone, the Baleful Faction must remove all three of the Defensive Traits from this War Zone. One Defensive Trait from the table below is removed with each Baleful victory in this War Zone – roll a D3 and remove the corresponding Defensive Trait from the list. If a result is rolled that corresponds with a Defensive Trait that has already been removed, re-roll the result. If the Baleful Faction wins and there are no more Defensive Traits to remove from the table opposite, then they gain control of the Wreck of the Red Tear War Zone. Once they have gained control of this War Zone, their opponent cannot control it again.

At the start of each turn, the Waylaid player rolls on the table opposite to determine which Defensive Trait is in effect.



D3	Result
1	**Overloaded Power Relay:** *The generator of the* Red Tear *has been overloaded to eke out what little remains in its energy banks.* All ground within 6" of the *Red Tear's* hull is classed as dangerous terrain. In addition to the standard rules for dangerous terrain, each unit within 3" of the *Red Tear's* hull takes D3 Str 4 AP 5 hits in this turn's Shooting phase.
2	**Functioning Weapons Turret:** *Somehow, some of the* Red Tear's *weapons are still functional.* In each Shooting phase, in addition to any other attacks made during this phase, the Waylaid player is counted as firing either a twin-linked heavy bolter or twin-linked lascannon from any point within 6" of the centre of the *Red Tear's* hull.
3	**Local Communications Array:** *Though the signal is weak, this array is able to broadcast short bursts of information to friendly troops.* Any Waylaid unit that Deep Strikes during this mission may either re-roll the Scatter dice when determining where this unit lands, or re-roll a result on the Deep Strike Mishaps table (if applicable). In addition, the Waylaid player may re-roll a failed Reserves roll of a 1.

Warp Conduit

'Throughout time immemorial, legend has always told of sorcerers and shamans using physical foci for the energy they possessed. Though unproven, it would not come as a surprise should the Beyond World operate in such a way, and I am such a foci to a higher power.'

Ramblings of an unknown heretic, found etched on a human thigh bone

The Armies

Choose the armies using The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts.

Setting up the Game

The Baleful use deployment zone A, and the Waylaid deployment zone B. Models must not be deployed within 12" of each other.

Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers, and deploy terrain on the battlefield. The Warp Conduit mission takes place in the grounds around the Cathedral of the Mark, so should be littered with rubble, trees, fallen statues and ruins.

Deployment

- Roll off. The winner may choose to deploy first or second.
- The player who deploys first deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units placed in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- The player who is deploying second then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units placed in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc, are as found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*.

Before the game begins, the Baleful player selects one of the table's long edges – for the remainder of the game, this edge represents the walls of the Cathedral of the Mark.

First Turn

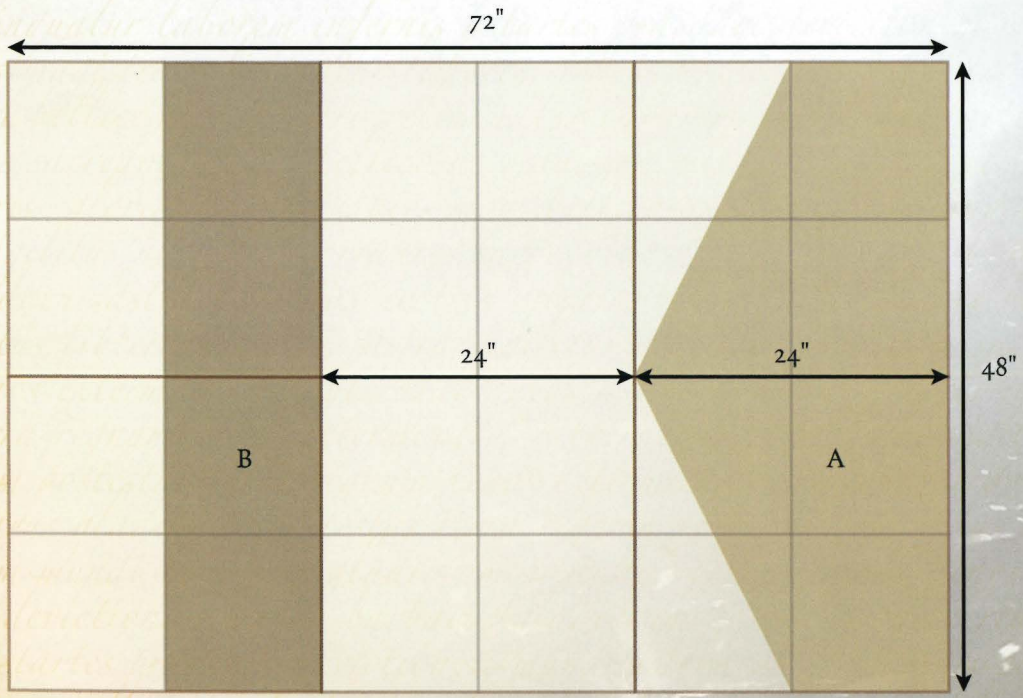
The Baleful player has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*).

Game Length

This mission lasts for six turns. At the end of turn six, roll a D6. On a 5+, a seventh and final turn is played.

Victory Conditions

Victory in this mission is assured by the scattering of the enemy's forces, lest they control the Baleful's seat of power. At the end of the game, the player who has scored the most Victory points has won the game. If players have the same number of Victory points, the game is a draw.



Primary Objective
To claim victory, the Waylaid must have more units in the Baleful deployment zone than their opponent does. Any other outcome results in a Baleful victory.

Secondary Objectives
Slay the Warlord, First Blood, Last Man Standing

Mission Special Rules
Reserves (see *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*)

Defensive Traits
To take control of the Cathedral of the Mark War Zone, the Waylaid Faction must remove all three of the Defensive Traits from this War Zone. One Defensive Trait from the table below is removed with each Waylaid victory in this War Zone – roll a D3 and remove the corresponding Defensive Trait from the list. If a result is rolled that corresponds with a Defensive Trait that has already been removed, re-roll the result. If the Waylaid Faction wins and there are no more Defensive Traits to remove from the table below, then they gain control of the Cathedral of the Mark War Zone. Once they have gained control of this War Zone, their opponent cannot control it again.

At the start of each turn, the Baleful player rolls on the table below to determine which Defensive Trait is in effect.

Historia Terra Regnum

D3	Result
1	**Energising Surge:** *The ethereal lights above the cathedral shimmer and shift as the energy of the Warp surges through all attuned below.* All Psykers within 6" of the Cathedral of the Mark table edge can re-roll results of a 6 when attempting to generate Warp Charge points.
2	**Living Lightning:** *Something has angered the dark patrons of the Warp, and bolts of energy crackle across the battlefield.* All ground within 6" of the Cathedral of the Mark table edge is classed as dangerous terrain. In each Shooting phase, one randomly selected unit within 6" of this table edge takes D6 Str 5 AP 4 hits.
3	**Tides of the Immaterium:** *The Warp's ever-changing currents crash down on the Cathedral of the Mark.* Daemons of the Ruinstorm units may re-roll all failed Reserves rolls. Any other Baleful army may re-roll failed Reserves rolls of a 1.

Where Angels Would Die

'Smothered and drowning in a boundless void, I am falling; blood falls upon my skin as rain. A fury unknown tears through what is left. I cannot fall. Something is laughing, something is rage. I cannot fall.'

Extract from Sanguinius' personal logs, source disputed by scholars

The Armies

Choose the armies using The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness rules and Force Organisation charts. Both the Waylaid and the Baleful should take their Heroes.

Setting up the Game

- Use the Clash of the Line deployment map (see *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*).
- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

Deployment

- The Waylaid player chooses their deployment zone and deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units placed in Reserve, into their deployment zone.

  Deploy the Waylaid Faction leader within 2" of the front edge of the deployment zone (the edge that is the furthest away from your table edge). They may not deploy outside of their deployment zone.
- The Baleful player then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units placed in Reserve, into their deployment zone. Deploy the Baleful Faction leader within 2"of the front edge of the deployment zone (the edge that is the furthest away from your table edge). They may not deploy outside of their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying into fortifications, Infiltrators, Scouts and Transport vehicles, etc, are as found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook.*

First Turn

The Baleful player has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative (see *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*).

Game Length

This game lasts for six turns. At the end of turn 6, the Baleful may roll for another game turn if the Baleful Faction leader has not been removed as a casualty. A seventh and final turn is played on a roll of 3+.

Victory Conditions

Primary Objective

The Baleful must slay the Waylaid Faction leader to win. The Waylaid must slay the Baleful Faction leader to win. Any other outcome results in a draw.

Secondary Objectives

First Blood, Last Man Standing, Fallen Angel

Fallen Angel: The player who slays one of the Faction leaders before the other falls earns 3 Victory points.

Mission Special Rules

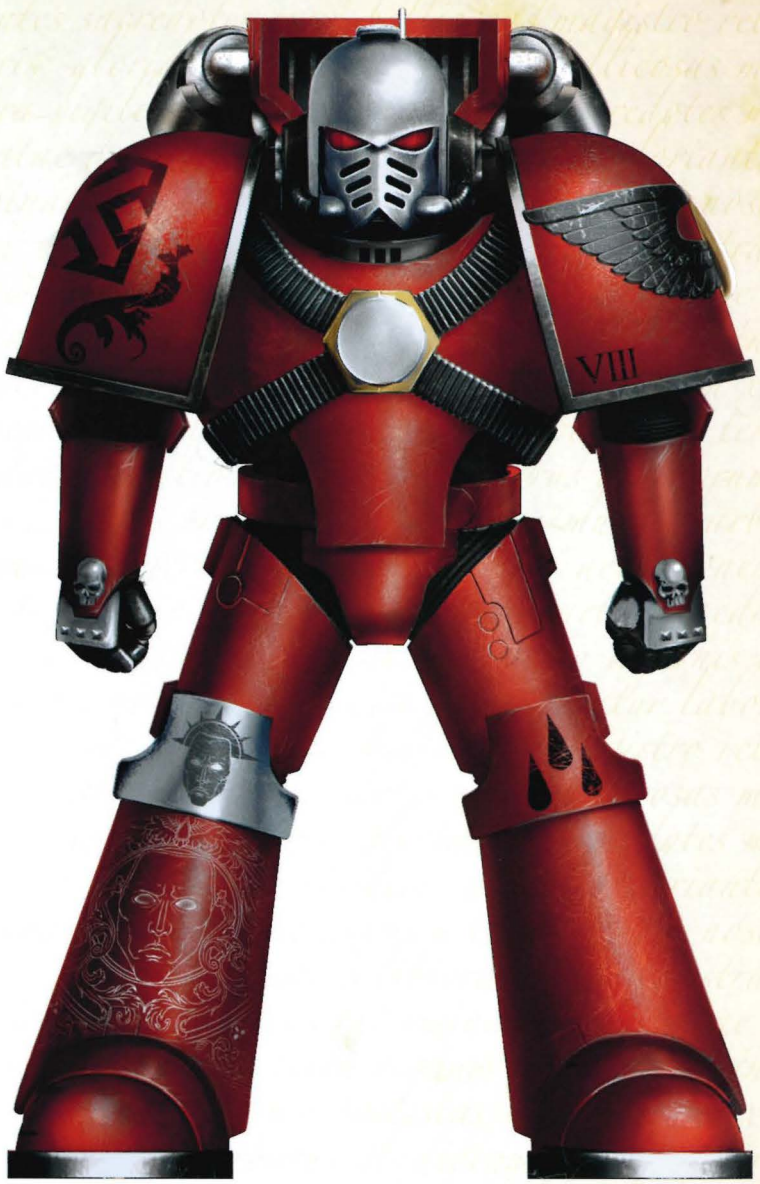
- **Reserves** (see *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*)

Blood Angels Assault Legionary

Sergeant Vallen Cast
8th Tactical Squad
1st Company, The Silver Host

The heraldry shown in this pict-capture is standard for the Blood Angels during the final years of the Great Crusade, featuring Divisio Militaris approved tactical markings with only minor embellishments. The left pauldron also bears a more ornate armourial device for the Legion, alongside unit insignia, while the right greave displays informal chapter icons for the Silver Host. Of particular note is the adoption of a silver helm and gauntlets, a practise adopted by the 11th Chapter after the Absolom campaign in the mid-years of the Great Crusade as a mark of pride for their achievements.

Now believed lost, Sergeant Cast and his Tactical squad were near the forefront of the Blood Angels' advance across Signus Prime. Little is known regarding the fate that befell Cast, however when the Legion came to count their dead after the battle, no physical trace of his body was located among the fallen. Rather, various fragments of his embellished armour were found scattered across one of the known battlefronts on which the Blood Angels fought the Daemonic legions. The rolls of the fallen kept to commemorate the Signus campaign make no mention of Sergeant Cast and his men, though whether this is a mark of honour or censure, none within the Legion will confirm.



Insignia of the 11th Company of the Blood Angels, known as the *Silver Host*.

Insignia of the 94th Company of the Blood Angels, known as the *Shroudmakers*.

Insignia of the 202nd Company of the Blood Angels, known as the *Crimson Aegis*.

The Chondax Campaign

How the Chondax Campaign Works

The campaign presented over the following section allows players to recreate the battles of the Chondax Engagement through a series of games of The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness, with one side representing those who were dispatched to pursue the pacification of the worlds of Chondax, and the other side representing those who act under the secret orders of the Warmaster to sow confusion amongst the ranks of their enemies.

The player who earns the greatest number of Victory points in any individual mission played in this campaign is the winner of that mission, and successes in individual missions grant players a number of Campaign points. The Faction which has earned the most Campaign points at the conclusion of the campaign is declared the overall victor.

During the campaign, the two sides play through two phases, the first of which, Deception, consists of three games representing examples of the many and various conflicts which took place during the Chondax Engagement, and the second phase, Destruction, consists of a pair of fixed scenarios representing the important final battles on the moon of Phemus IV that concluded the conflict. Each of these phases makes use of its own special rules, as well as the Boons of Treachery, a series of ruses which players can make use of to influence the course of their battles. For players looking to extend their campaign further, this section also contains a selection of additional optional rules.

To play this campaign, you need two players with armies taken from the various The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness army lists produced by Forge World, but there is no upward limit as to how many players can take part in this campaign. Missions in this section can easily be adapted for multiple players, and this campaign is intentionally presented in a format to suit a widespread campaign involving a large number of players which can be played over the course of a weekend or, if players so wish, can be extended to run over a period of their choosing. Generally, you should aim for an equal number of players on each side as it will be easier to arrange games, but if this cannot be achieved, it simply means that some players may have to play more games during the course of the campaign.

It is worth noting that campaigns involving more players will require a greater amount of terrain, gaming space and player dedication to bring the campaign to a satisfactory conclusion.

If you do have a large number of players, it is worth having one person act as referee and organiser rather than as a player, to impartially record results between sessions. Of course, players should always support them by providing them with all of the information they require for bookkeeping promptly, not to mention thank them for their hard work at the end of the campaign!

Victory Points

Players may earn Victory points (VPs) by achieving the mission objectives of each scenario in this campaign. In missions in this campaign, victory is determined by how many Victory points a player has at the end of the game. It is therefore worth keeping a record of the Victory points you earn across each phase, particularly if you are playing as part of a team, as this can be used to determine who earns fame (or infamy) at the end of the campaign.

Campaign Points

Each battle in this campaign earns a Faction a certain number of Campaign points (CPs), depending on its outcome. The victor of each phase is determined by the number of Campaign points they have accrued during the phase. The Faction with the most Campaign points at the conclusion of the campaign is the overall victor of the Chondax campaign. Campaign points can also be used to keep track of an entire Faction's performance against their opponents', so it's worth keeping a log of all Campaign points earned during the campaign.

The Armies

Each player should draw their armies from the most recent versions of The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness army lists. Ideally, these should reflect the forces present on Chondax during the cleansing, such as the White Scars, Alpha Legion, Solar Auxilia, Sisters of Silence, etc.

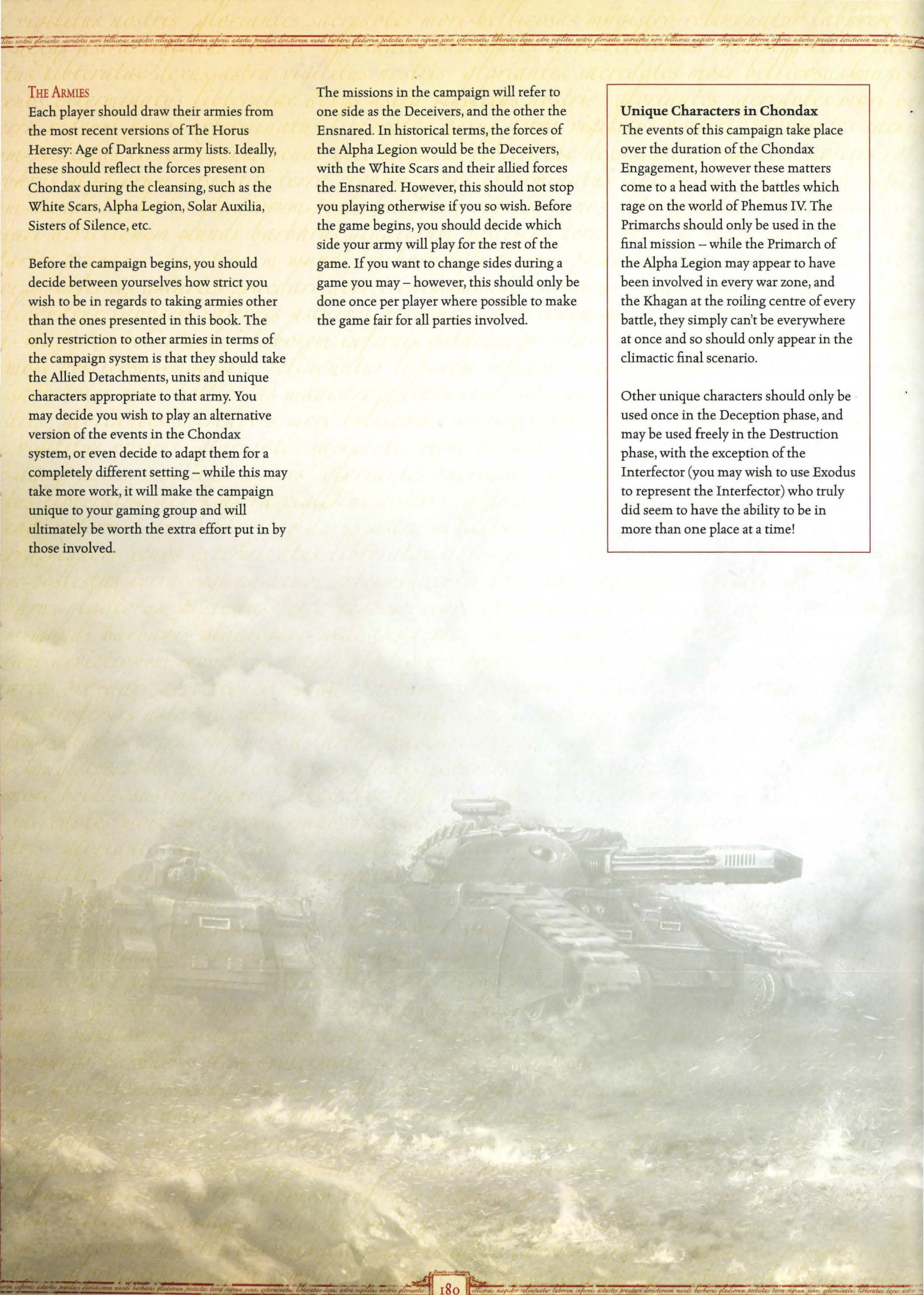
Before the campaign begins, you should decide between yourselves how strict you wish to be in regards to taking armies other than the ones presented in this book. The only restriction to other armies in terms of the campaign system is that they should take the Allied Detachments, units and unique characters appropriate to that army. You may decide you wish to play an alternative version of the events in the Chondax system, or even decide to adapt them for a completely different setting – while this may take more work, it will make the campaign unique to your gaming group and will ultimately be worth the extra effort put in by those involved.

The missions in the campaign will refer to one side as the Deceivers, and the other the Ensnared. In historical terms, the forces of the Alpha Legion would be the Deceivers, with the White Scars and their allied forces the Ensnared. However, this should not stop you playing otherwise if you so wish. Before the game begins, you should decide which side your army will play for the rest of the game. If you want to change sides during a game you may – however, this should only be done once per player where possible to make the game fair for all parties involved.

Unique Characters in Chondax

The events of this campaign take place over the duration of the Chondax Engagement, however these matters come to a head with the battles which rage on the world of Phemus IV. The Primarchs should only be used in the final mission – while the Primarch of the Alpha Legion may appear to have been involved in every war zone, and the Khagan at the roiling centre of every battle, they simply can't be everywhere at once and so should only appear in the climactic final scenario.

Other unique characters should only be used once in the Deception phase, and may be used freely in the Destruction phase, with the exception of the Interfector (you may wish to use Exodus to represent the Interfector) who truly did seem to have the ability to be in more than one place at a time!



Campaign Duration

This campaign consists of two phases, the first of which is composed of three missions and the second of two scenarios. The recommended way to play this campaign is to approach the phases in the order presented, for a total of five games. The linear style of campaign presented is best suited to a two-day event format, with each phase played in a single day.

The alternative recommended way to play this campaign represents the inconclusive and often indecisive nature of the Chondax Engagement itself. If players wish, they may instead play the first phase more than once and also alternate between phases freely. In this case, it is recommended that players play the missions in phase one in a random order, and that each time the Deception phase is played, it is concluded with a single Destruction phase mission. This method of play allows players to accumulate Boons of Treachery to greater effect on the outcomes of the final mission. In this style of play, the campaign immediately ends after the Serpent Hunt mission is played for the first time.

Players who wish to adapt this campaign to play over a given period of time should set their own maximum duration and number of games to play. A good maximum duration to set for your campaign is roughly equal to the time that you think it will take to play through a phase which you believe you can comfortably manage. In this case, each Campaign phase may last until an agreed number of games has been played or an agreed amount of time has passed. Once either of these conditions has been met, the phase ends, the Campaign points are totalled up and the phase's victor is determined. The following phase then begins. Depending on your group's preferences, you may set the phase duration to be as long or as short as you like. Having a time limit keeps the campaign moving forwards and gives each phase a definite 'end', which can help keep players motivated and interested.

Designer's Note

This campaign is based on events described in this volume of Forge World's Horus Heresy saga as well as those in Black Library's *The Horus Heresy* series of novels. Despite the Chondax Engagement being a crucial event in the Horus Heresy narrative, it does not determine who is victorious, who is defeated and who dies in the battles you fight. The outcome of your campaign could also easily serve as inspiration for further campaigns. *The Horus Heresy Book Four – Conquest* provides some excellent ways for taking your campaign further, as the rules for Unique Characters and War Zones would be ideal for building upon the fallout from your campaign.

Campaign Rules

Boons of Treachery

Any game played as part of the Chondax campaign makes use of Boons of Treachery. These are the strategies and ruses employed by each Faction involved in the engagement to outwit and outmanoeuvre their opponents. The Factions involved learn from each conflict, making use of their accumulated knowledge as the campaign progresses.

At the beginning of the campaign, each side rolls once on their Faction's respective Boons of Treachery table. Further Boons can be earned through successes in campaign battles as follows. At the end of a battle, a single additional Boon may be rolled for by either Faction on their respective table, dependent on the result of the battle as follows:

- **Victory:** The winning Faction earns one Boon of Treachery.
- **Draw:** In the event of a Draw, the Slay the Warlord Secondary Objective dictates which Faction(s) earn a Boon of Treachery.
  - If only one Faction has achieved the Slay the Warlord objective, only that Faction earns one Boon of Treachery.
  - If neither Faction has achieved the Slay the Warlord objective, both Factions earn one Boon of Treachery.
  - If both Factions have achieved the Slay the Warlord objective, neither Faction earns any Boons of Treachery.
- **Loss:** The losing Faction does not earn a Boon of Treachery.

The same Boon may be earned multiple times. Make note of any Boon of Treachery which is rolled for, as these are retained for the duration of the campaign.

Before any models are placed on the table in Chondax campaign battles, players must declare which Boons they wish to use and which units these have been assigned to, if applicable (you don't need to reveal any secret selections until that Boon comes into effect). Players may make use of as many Boons as they have acquired in every battle, and indeed may assign more than one Boon to a single unit, however the same Boon may not be applied to a unit more than once.

Historia Terra Regnum

Ensnared Boons of Treachery Table

D6	Result
1	**Wisdom Learned:** Roll again on the Deceivers Boons of Treachery table.
2	**Chogorian Gloom Rocket:** *Traditionally fired by bow from horseback to mask the approach of riders at the head of a tribal raid, the gloom rockets launched from missile tubes by the White Scars disperse a dense cloud of particulate matter laced with Chogorian ink, which is capable of momentarily blotting out the light of a local star.* Once per game, at the beginning of any of the opposing player's turns, the Ensnared player may declare that Night Fighting is in effect for the duration of that player turn.
3	**Strike and Fade:** Select a single friendly unit. That unit gains the Hit and Run special rule. If that unit already has the Hit and Run special rule, it automatically passes Initiative tests when it attempts to Hit and Run.
4	**From Pain, Swiftness:** Once per game, at the beginning of any of the controlling player's turns, the Ensnared player may declare that, for the duration of that player turn, all friendly units have the Fleet special rule.
5	**From Surprise, Courage:** Once per game, at the beginning of any of the controlling player's turns, the Ensnared player may declare that, for the duration of that player turn, all friendly units have the Hammer of Wrath special rule, and that any successful wounds caused by Hammer of Wrath are resolved at AP 4 and are Concussive.
6	**From Disgust, Poetry:** Select a single friendly unit. That unit increases its Weapon Skill and Initiative characteristics by +1 for this mission.

Deceivers Boons of Treachery Table

D6	Result
1	**Mimic:** Roll again on the Ensnared Boons of Treachery table.
2	**Buried Assets:** Select a single friendly unit composed entirely of Vehicles. This unit must be held in Reserve in this game. Secretly make a note of a single area of terrain before the game begins. When this unit enters play from Reserves, it may move on from Reserve as if any part of this terrain is the controlling player's table edge.
3	**Manipulation:** Select a single friendly unit which will be held in Reserve. This unit may enter play from Reserves automatically on a turn of your choosing, from turn 2 onwards. Secretly make a note of which game turn the unit will enter play from Reserves before the game begins and reveal this to your opponent when the unit is due to arrive.
4	**Intimidation:** Select a single friendly unit. That unit increases its Strength characteristic by +1 and causes Fear in this mission.
5	**Mutability:** Select a single friendly unit. They may choose a Mutable Tactic from the list provided in the Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion) special rule. If this unit has the Legiones Astartes (Alpha Legion) special rule already, it may choose a second Mutable Tactic.
6	**False Flags:** Select a single friendly Infantry, Jump Infantry, Bike or Jetbike unit before the game begins. This unit must be held in Reserve in this game as a False Flags unit and may not deploy within a Transport. At the beginning of the game, secretly note down one of the Ensnared player's units with the Infantry, Jump Infantry, Bike or Jetbike unit type; this is the Noted unit. Roll for Reserves for the False Flags unit as normal. If the Noted unit is embarked in a transport or held in Reserve on the turn in which the Deceivers' False Flags unit arrives on the table (or has been destroyed prior to this), the False Flags unit immediately suffers a Deepstrike Mishap. If not, the Noted unit then enters Ongoing Reserves and is removed from the play area, regardless of whether they were locked in combat or any other factors, and the False Flags unit deploys as if from Deep Strike, without scattering, with the first model placed in the same position as any of the Noted unit's models had occupied, so long as it is 1" away from any other unit. If this occurs in the player who went second's fourth Player turn, the Noted unit automatically re-enters play from reserve in the opposing player's next turn.

Phase One – Deception

As the White Scars prosecuted the cleansing of the Chondax system under the orders of the Warmaster, they found the fates of heaven against them. Supply lines were disrupted, critical strike forces waylaid or lost, and the Orkoid threat somehow executing manoeuvres and ambushes thought impossible to orchestrate by such primitive, bellicose minds. The auxiliary Imperial command structure present in the Chondax system laid the blame at the feet of the Vth Legion for outrunning their allies in their hedonistic pursuits of the hunt and making war, and ultimately the Khagan himself for not reining in his warriors and liaising appropriately with his less mobile allies. Over a period of months and years, the conflict became an unending, indeterminate slog. The Imperium's forces grew frustrated with their minor victories, constant missteps and a lack of decisive success. The White Scars fought ever on, but suffered inexplicable losses disproportionate to the threat they knew themselves to be facing.

The truth beneath the surface of Imperial misfortunes would be revealed much later. The Alpha Legion, present in hundreds of operational cells secreted throughout the worlds of the Chondax system, waged their own shadow campaign. Acting also on the orders of the Warmaster, the Alpha Legion's lot was not to destroy the White Scars. Indeed, their orders in hindsight appear to have been not to engage their fellow Legiones Astartes at all, but rather to waylay and misdirect them; to hold the Vth Legion in place on Chondax, isolated and blind to the Warmaster's civil war until such a time as he could disclose his supremacy on a galactic scale, on his own terms, offering the Vth Legion no choice but to join him. The Alpha Legion appear to have followed these orders on the whole, though their actions speak to the intent and not the letter of Horus' instruction at this time.

The Alpha Legion struck in secret, manipulating the unruly mass of Orks, channelling them into lethal and focussed strikes. The XXth Legion made rapid, surgical strikes against critical White Scars formations leaving no witnesses and erasing any evidence which could suggest that warriors of the Legiones Astartes not of the Cleansing campaign were present. The warriors of the Hydra even wore false flags, painting their armour in the heraldry of the Hordes of Chogoris to insinuate themselves amongst Imperial forces, misdirecting or turning upon the Loyalists to serve their greater scheme. Thus were the seeds of division sown.

Deception Phase Rules

The Deception phase represents the opening stages of the Chondax Engagement, when the Ensnared forces are unaware of the presence of the Deceivers in their midst. The recommended points level for missions in the Deception phase is 1,000-2,000 points, and you may find that these missions benefit from a greater level of terrain density on the tabletop.

In this phase, Campaign points earned for each battle are as follows:

Result	CPs
Deceivers Victory	8
Ensnared Victory	7
Draw (both Factions)	D3+1
Deceivers Loss	3
Ensnared Loss	2

At the end of the set number of games which players have agreed to play for this phase, tally up each Faction's Campaign points. The side with the greater total has won this phase of the campaign. Players should now begin phase two.

Deception Phase Force Requirements

In this phase, players should compose their forces as per the usual process as described on pages 128-139 of *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*, making use only of the Crusade Force Organisation chart, with the addition of the following restrictions to represent the smaller scale, highly mobile and rapid nature of the skirmishes in the early phase of the Chondax engagement:

- Armies may choose a maximum of one unit containing any models with either the Artillery, Tank or Monstrous Creature unit types.
- Armies may not include any units which have the Immobile, Heavy, Drop Pod Assault or Subterranean Assault special rules.
- Armies may not include Flyers, Gargantuan Creatures, Super-heavy Vehicles, Super-heavy Walkers, Super-heavy Flyers, Primarchs or any model with greater than 3 Hull points.
- Fortifications may not be used.

Designer's Note

The Deception phase force requirements are designed to simulate the light and mobile forces which would have most accurately been involved in the early stages of the Chondax Engagement. Players are encouraged to make greater use of Infantry, Bikes, Jetbikes and Skimmers in these battles, though these unit types are by no means an exhaustive list of possible options. You may have also noticed that these restrictions preclude some Rites of War and styles of play. While this is an intentional aspect of this phase of the Chondax campaign system, if players do not have the models available in their collections to create an applicable force, they can of course agree to use forces which better suit them.

Phase Two – Destruction

As the Alpha Legion's scheming intensified, it became difficult for them to continue to conceal the extent of their shadow war against the increasingly frustrated White Scars and their allies, who had begun to seek answers for their misfortunes on Chondax. Soon, the many threads of the Alpha Legion's plots began to unravel and the engagement became more of a clear cut act of open conflict between the two brother Legions. For the White Scars, at last, a foe revealed itself which could be attacked head-on. Notions of caution and ambiguity were brushed aside by the Vth Legion – they could once again ride to war laughing as they were released from the Alpha Legion's webs of confusion.

At once, the Khagan ordered his Legion to regroup, to strike as a cohesive whole against the Alpha Legion's blockade. While the majority of the Legion was able to comply with this order, many dozens of Brotherhoods were already embroiled in internecine wars across the system, on worlds as far flung as Terns, where it was impossible for them to respond with the urgency that the Primarch demanded. With time against them, having been held at Chondax for so long already, the White Scars were forced to leave hundreds of their own behind as they struck back at the Alpha Legion in an attempt to glean the answers which could inform them as to the reasoning behind the XXth Legion's actions.

In the ensuing engagements, the White Scars would defeat the Alpha Legion's fleet, outwit their traps and hunt for their leader – thinking this to be Alpharius himself. Each battle taught the White Scars much about their foe, but little about their enemy's motivations. Across a score of minor engagements and a handful of larger battles, the XXth Legion was shown to be a riddled façade of falsehood. Their fleet was discovered to consist of largely decoy vessels, their boltholes on the ground simply empty warrens and their Primarch, who had appeared to be everywhere, was nowhere to be found. However, one critical lesson stuck with the Vth Legion, and in it was born a legacy of mistrust. After the destruction of Phemus IV, it is thought that approximately 6,000 warriors of the White Scars were killed by the Alpha Legion in the years of the Chondax Engagement. Of the Alpha Legion's own casualties, it is impossible to say, though rough estimates would have it that when the Khagan descended on Phemus IV, nearly 2,000 Alpha Legionnaires were killed in the assault on their stronghold alone.

Destruction Phase Rules

The Destruction phase represents the closing stages of the Chondax Engagement, when the Ensnared forces have finally parted the veil of confusion which had enshrouded the actions of their true enemy. For the Deceivers, the ruse is over and they are forced into open conflict. Jaghatai Khan himself plays a major role in the final battle of this phase, and in their anger and desperation, both sides unleashed the full complement of the arsenals available to them. Missions in this phase are recommended to only be played once, in the order in which they are presented – they represent the conclusion of the campaign. The recommended points level for missions in the Destruction phase is 2,500-3,000 points.

In this phase, the Campaign points earned for each battle are as follows:

Result	CPs
Deceivers Victory	7
Ensnared Victory	10
Draw (both Factions)	D3+3
Deceivers Loss	3
Ensnared Loss	4

At the end of the set number of games which players have agreed to play for this phase, tally up each Faction's Campaign points from this phase. The side with the greater total has won this phase of the campaign. At the end of this phase, the campaign ends.

Destruction Phase Force Requirements

The full panoply of war is available to players in this phase, with the exception that Primarchs may only be used in the Serpent Hunt mission. Players should compose their forces as per the usual process, as described on pages 128-139 of *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*.

Winning the Campaign

At the end of the final mission of the Destruction phase, tally the total number of Campaign points earned. The Faction (either Ensnared or Deceivers) with the greatest number of Campaign points earned are the overall victors of the Chondax Campaign.

Campaign Optional Rules

The following is a list of rules you may wish to use in your campaign to make it unique to your gaming group. These rules are not compulsory, so players should agree on their use before the campaign begins.

Warlord and Famed Character Casualties

The fate of heroic warlords, as well as famed and infamous characters, is a key part of the struggle and epic scale of the Horus Heresy, and such influential figures cannot be simply expended as resources – for no force can expect to succeed in battle without their greatest warriors.

If a player's Warlord and/or any unique named characters* in play are removed as a casualty during a campaign game (including falling back off the table, etc.), the player must roll a D6 for each character at the end of the game. The results as shown in the Warlord and Famed Characters Fatality table that follows apply to the remainder of the player's games in the campaign. If the controlling player was victorious in the game in which the character was removed as a casualty, they may re-roll the result.

**This refers to any characters players have named themselves for use in this campaign as well as any Independent Character that has a unique rules profile in any of the Forge World The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness army lists.*

The Wider Chondax Engagement

While the fighting culminated on Phemus IV, the many worlds of the trinary star system all experienced small scale skirmishes, both before and after the command echelons of the White Scars became aware of the treachery of the Alpha Legion. Whether these battles took place on frozen Bifrust, watery Epihelikon or the salt plains of the White World itself, there is plenty of room for players to explore battles within the wider conflict.

Chondax Engagement battles are a brilliant way of involving your entire gaming club in massive team battles, or hosting larger battles for a small team, allowing you to represent the many and varied conflicts of the shadowed campaign that the Alpha Legion undertook to sow confusion among the White Scars and their loyal allies. While the Alpha Legion instigated the majority of these attacks through clandestine means, they were spread thin and neither side could truly hold the advantage of the Chondax Engagement before the perfidy of the XXth Legion was revealed. In each skirmish, the main objective of the Deceivers was to disrupt those whom they had Ensnared, and no survivors could be left alive to bear witness and bring news of the Alpha Legion's presence to the Vth Legion. Utter destruction of the enemy, then, was the only acceptable outcome of such battles – the perfect backdrop upon which teams can lay waste to one another in their struggle for dominance!

The battles of the wider Chondax Engagement allow groups of players to contribute to the cause of either the Deceivers or the Ensnared. Players are encouraged to decide how big they want their games to be and which world their battle takes place on. They may also wish to use the unique army restrictions from the Deception phase of this campaign to recreate tense, thematic team battles.

These battles award Campaign points to both Factions, and the distribution is as follows:

Players	Victory	Draw	Loss
2-3	3	2	1
4-5	4	2	1
6-7	5	3	2
8+	6	4	2

Planetary Conditions

The worlds of the Chondax system were numerous and varied in their topography and environmental conditions, and though the nature of the conflict was consistent, each world imparted its own challenges to the combatants embroiled in the Chondax Engagement. Players may, if they wish, agree to use these additional Planetary Conditions when playing games in the Chondax system. Pick one set of Planetary Conditions per battle, based on the world in play. Players may of course select their own series of worlds, or invent their own planetary conditions for worlds not listed in their own rendition of the Chondax campaign.

Historia Terra Regnum

Warlord and Famed Characters Fatality Table

D6	Result
1-2	**Mortally Wounded:** This character is critically wounded and may not be used again in this phase of the campaign. However, they may be used again in later phases of the campaign unless agreed otherwise. The opposing side gains +1 Campaign point.
3-4	**Shaken:** Your character is shaken by their ill fortune on the battlefield and, in their next game, your character (regardless of who they are) suffers a -1 Leadership penalty for the duration of the phase. This penalty is not cumulative for multiple results of Shaken per phase. However, it may be re-applied if they roll this result in a subsequent phase.
5+	**Unscathed:** Your character has escaped permanent injury and may be used again in subsequent games without ill effect.

Irra Majoris
A highly dense planetoid whose gravitational influence plucked the freely roaming ice-covered rock of Irra Minoris from space and dragged it into a binary cluster in a previous epoch.

Due to the high gravity on Irra Majoris, the maximum range of all weaponry other than melta, volkite and las weapons is reduced by 6" (note that Template weapons are unaffected). Additionally, Strength tests taken on this world are at a -1 Strength penalty and any Flyer which has not moved Flat Out must roll a D6 at the end of the controlling player's Shooting phase. On a roll of a 1, that flyer will immediately Crash and Burn!.

Shaln
Shaln is dominated by shallow, mildly acidic oceans whose currents impede freedom of movement, and whose corrosive acid finds its way into the inner workings of engines and other mechanisms.

Movement and Run distances on Shaln are reduced by 1" for Infantry (when on foot in the case of Jump and Jet Pack units), Bikes, Walkers and Tanks. In addition, vehicles driving through the acidic shallows run the risk of their engines becoming corroded and failing. Before any vehicle which is not a Flyer, Walker, Skimmer or any type of Super-heavy moves, roll a D6. On a 1, that vehicle's engine fails to turn over and it may not move or make a Flat Out move this turn. Passengers may embark or disembark, and the vehicle may shoot as normal, however.

Kren
The dwarf planet of Kren is host to a unique ecosystem which thrives on large quantities of naturally produced radioactive material. The local megaflora extrude a pollen-like substance composed largely of radioactive isotopes which is captured and proliferated by hot ash winds across the stratosphere.

All models suffer a -1 penalty to their Toughness value on Kren. This effect can stack with other sources of concentrated radiation, such as rad grenades. Models which are immune to the harmful effects of radiation, such as those which are immune to rad grenades, and those which are Void Hardened ignore this effect.

Byfrust
Byfrust is an ice world on which every step can be treacherous; the glacial surface conceals hidden crevasses which can tear away in unexpected avalanches as the weight of armour stresses fault lines, or result in dramatic flooding as battlefield ordnance flash-melts vast quantities of ice.

On Byfrust all difficult terrain is considered to be dangerous terrain, and Dangerous Terrain tests are failed on a 1 or a 2.

Phemus IV
Phemus IV is a volcanic world of igneous rock and shifting lava-formed landscapes. Tectonic quakes and explosive volcanic eruptions are common, and can change the course of a battle.

At the beginning of each game turn, roll a D3 and consult the following table:

D3	Result
1	Nothing happens.
2	**Earthquake:** All ground becomes difficult terrain for this game turn. Terrain that is already difficult terrain becomes dangerous terrain. Impassable terrain is not affected.
3	**Volcanic event:** D3+1 magma vents erupt into life, which are represented by Large Blast (5") markers. These must scatter 4D6" from the centre of the table, ignoring Hit! results on the Scatter dice. Any models fully or partially under the final position of the marker suffer one Str 8 AP 3 hit, against which cover saves may not be taken. These areas are both difficult terrain and dangerous terrain for the remainder of the game.

Secret Objectives

It was not always clear who the victor truly was in any isolated skirmish during the later stages of the Chondax Engagement, with both the Deceivers and the Ensnared forces claiming victory over the same fields of corpses on many occasions. The skirmishes themselves were often mere means to some other, undeclared end. What objectives could drive either Faction to such acts of wanton destruction with little care for their own lives is now an exercise in futile speculation to Imperium scholars, for there is no way to ever know the truth.

To reflect the concealed nature of Chondax's conflicts, players may wish to make use of a selection of Secret Objectives as additional Secondary Objectives for their games during the Chondax campaign. To make use of these Secret Objectives, players may choose to draw up to three Secret Objectives at random by rolling on the following table before the game begins. Once you have chosen to draw a Secret Objective for a game, you must use that objective and may not discard it unless instructed to do so in the Secret Objective's description. If a player achieves these objectives during the game, they gain the number of Campaign points stated on the objective, but should they fail to complete these objectives, they come at a cost – their opponent may be able to achieve the objective instead! Players should only draw as many Secret Objectives as they are confident they can achieve.

Designer's Note: Some players may prefer to draw cards from a deck to determine which Secret Objectives they have – in which case they should make two sets of the six Secret Objectives opposite, one for themselves and one for their opponent to draw from. These cards should only say the name of the objective on one side so that they can be easily concealed from your opponent!

Secret Objectives Table

D6	Result	CPs Awarded
1	**Chosen Ground**	1

There are finer treasures to be found lying fallow on ancient worlds than many Imperial scholars dare to dream of. Such advantageous trinkets may draw the eye of a canny commander.

Before the game begins, secretly assign the centre of a single piece of terrain outside of the controlling player's deployment zone as an objective. Make a note of this and reveal it to your opponent at the end of the game. Either side may score this objective if they hold it at the end of the game.

2	**Guard the Lynchpin**	1

Some warriors are destined for greater victories than can be attained on such paltry battlefields. To survive to shape the course of history, they must be shielded from the onslaught of the enemy.

Before the game begins, secretly assign a single Elites choice from your army to be your Lynchpin unit. To score this objective, the Lynchpin unit must survive the battle and must not be falling back at the end of the game. If your enemy destroys your Lynchpin unit, they score this objective instead. If you do not have any Elites choices in your army, discard this objective.

3	**Necessary Sacrifices**	1

Through sacrifice, martyrs are made, and their deaths spur their brethren to fight all the harder. Whether through flagrant heroics or untempered incompetence, a warlord sometimes gives their life for the greater good.

To score this objective your Warlord must be slain during the battle. If your Warlord survives, your opponent scores this objective instead.

4	**Bloodlust**	D3

When the odds are against them, some warriors choose to retreat to fight another day. Others damn the consequences and let loose their hatred for their enemy, screaming defiance as they charge to death or glory.

To achieve this objective, the controlling player must successfully make three charge moves in a single turn. If your opponent successfully makes three charge moves in a single turn before you have achieved this objective, they steal (and score) this objective instead. Immediately as either player achieves this objective, reveal it to your opponent. After this objective has been scored, no further benefit can be gained from it by either player. If both players hold this Secret Objective, only the first player to achieve it may score it and only D3 Campaign points are earned in total.

5	**Silence the Big Guns**	2

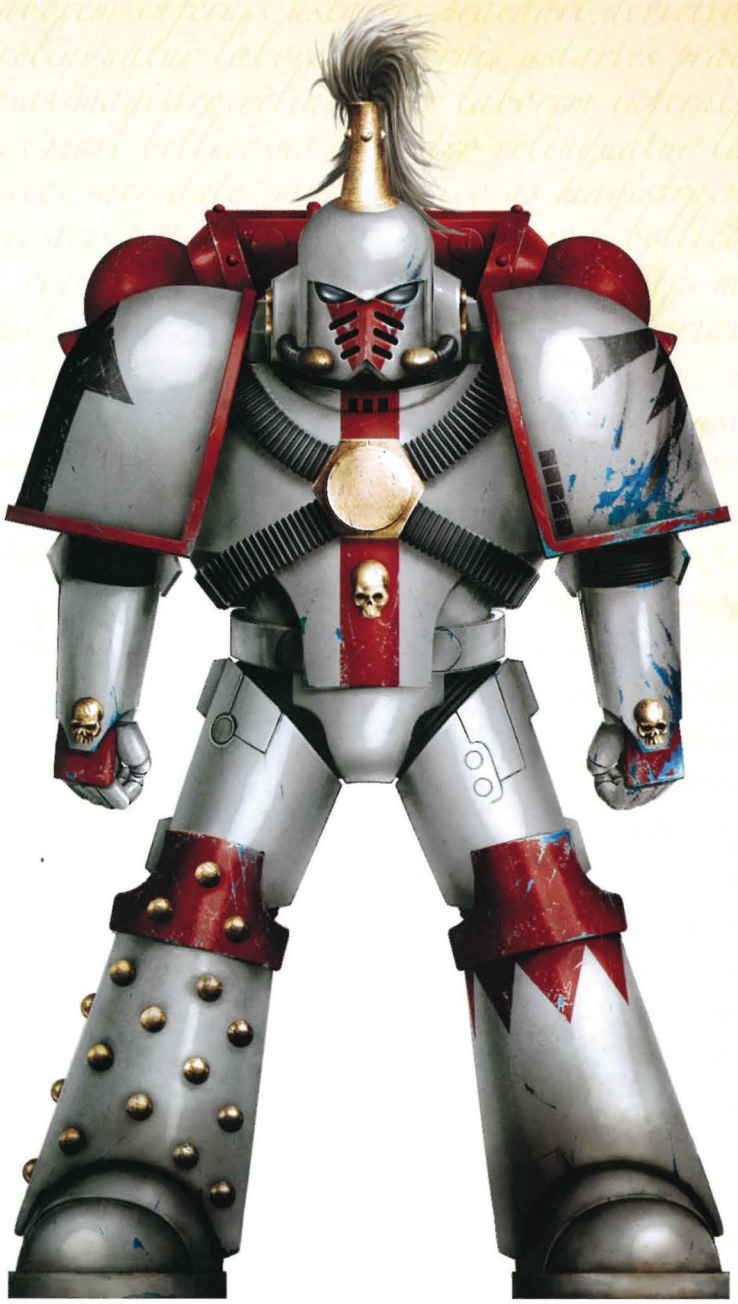
The heavy weapons of an enemy are capable of defining the terms of any engagement. To re-define those terms, the power of their big guns must be silenced, and the initiative stolen from them at all costs.

To score this objective, you must destroy all of your opponent's Heavy Support choices. For the purposes of this objective, squadrons of vehicles taken as a Heavy Support choice constitute a single Heavy Support choice, while each Dreadnought in a Talon taken as a Heavy Support choice constitutes a separate Heavy Support choice.

6	**Decapitate the Foe**	1 per HQ choice

"It is said of the Hydra that it has many heads, and that for each destroyed two more spring up in its place. Let us see how many we have to cut off before it falls still." – Muqalai Khan, The Song of Flashing Blades

To score this objective, you must destroy your opponent's HQ choices. For the purposes of this objective, Command Squads and other retinues which are purchased separately to a HQ unit but do not take up a HQ slot count as separate HQ choices.



Alpha Legionnaire

Unknown Warrior, Alpha Legion Infiltration Unit, Eshmun Stalker Force

This Alpha Legionnaire of the so called 'Fifth Column' is shown masquerading as a veteran of the White Scars during the Hetenborg Hill Massacre on Eshmun, third planet of Chondax's mid-system belt. His armour has been hastily re-painted in the appearance of a White Scars Legionary; battle damage partially revealing the familiar turquoise of the XXth Legion. Indeed, the tribal scar-like heraldry of the White Scars is too crudely rendered to pass any but the most cursory inspection, and the markings in the position of Chogorian glyphs on his shoulder guard are but a simple simulacrum of those used by the Vth Legion, though they would be difficult to distinguish from a distance.

In one of the final actions of the Chondax Cleansing, the 42nd Seraphine Guard regiment of the Imperial Army had crossed the open desert to reach the Hetenborg Hill. Cresting the hill, the Guard's commanding officer, Colonel Naeth, found it to be a wide and low caldera thickly inhabited by Orkoids and so signalled to nearby Vth Legion battlegroups for reinforcement. Two Brotherhoods of the Legiones Astartes responded, the first of which arrived on Jetbikes to stand beside the Imperial Army formation and the second on the distant opposite ridge of the great crater, their leader indicating readiness with an upraised gauntlet, glinting white in the oppressive sunlight. Alongside the White Scars Jetbikes, the Seraphine Guard charged into the greenskin menace. As soon as these forces were embroiled in desperate melee, however, they found the support of the second White Scars Brotherhood missing and Hetenborg Hill's ridge instead surrounded by warriors clad in the livery of the Alpha Legion, guns levelled not at the Orks, but at the Imperial forces.

Deception Phase Mission 1 – The Lure

'Tricks and treachery are the domains of cowards who lack the courage and skill to approach their foe by direct and honest means. An empire built upon the weak foundation of lies is wont to collapse as a fortress built on shifting sands.'

Rogal Dorn, Primarch of the VIIth Legiones Astartes, spoken to his brothers at the Compliance of Emunroth

From the radioactive tar sands of Kren to the salt plains of Chondax, at some unknown command, the Alpha Legion made themselves known. Approaching the White Scars with open hands and the smiles of brothers long apart, the Alpha Legion put the unwitting Loyalist forces at ease, lulling them into dropping their guard before striking with fangs at the bared throats of the Loyalist commanders. In most instances, it was already too late when the Alpha Legion struck, and no survivors remained to warn their brethren of the XXth Legion's treachery. However, the Legiones Astartes are ever wary, and the White Scars, so long isolated from the main body of the Great Crusade, had martial instincts honed to a killing edge. Chogorian commanders, alerted by subtle cues from their counterparts were often able to avoid the initial strike, struggling to break free, often only to be gunned down by the waiting ranks of the XXth Legion.

This mission represents the conflicts which resulted from the ill-intentioned Deceivers approaching the Ensnared across the battlefields of the Chondax system. Furthermore, this mission includes the added twist that in the initial confusion, a Faction may find that their commander is out of position and exposed to enemy guns.

The Armies

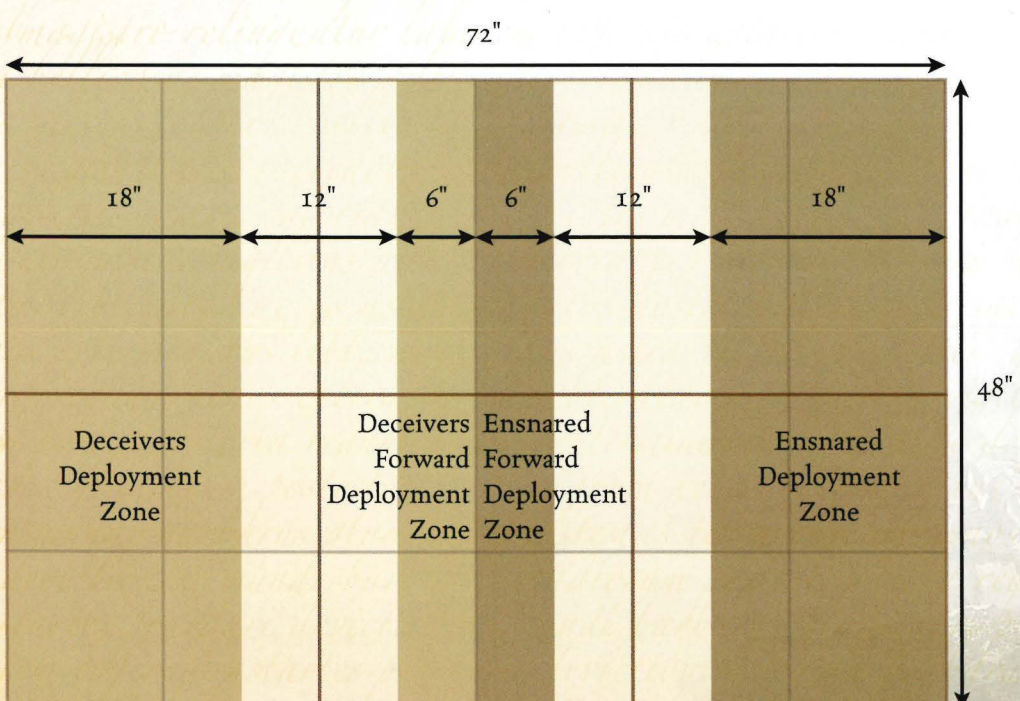
Choose your armies as described in the Campaign Rules section.

Setting up the Game

- Use the deployment map shown.
- Set up terrain for the battlefield; you may wish to have a central clearing for the parley to occur in.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

Deployment

- The Deceivers player selects their deployment zone and deploys their entire force into this, except for any units held in Reserve, their Warlord and any unit to which their Warlord is attached. Note that for this mission, neither side's Warlord may deploy within any Transport.
- The Ensnared player then deploys their entire force into their deployment zone, except for any units held in Reserve, their Warlord and any unit to which their Warlord is attached. Note that for this mission, neither side's Warlord may deploy within any Transport.
- The Deceivers player now rolls a D6. On a 4+, the Forward Deployment Zones of each Faction are swapped. If the Forward Deployment Zones are swapped, deploy such that the Deceivers' Warlord deploys in the Ensnared Forward deployment zone and vice versa.



- The Deceivers player now deploys their Warlord and any unit their Warlord is attached to into their Forward Deployment Zone. The Ensnared player then deploys their Warlord and any unit their Warlord is attached to into their Forward Deployment Zone.
- Rules for deploying Infiltrators and Scouts etc., are as found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*.

First Turn
The Deceivers player has the first turn, unless the Ensnared player can Seize the Initiative.

Game Length
Variable Game Length: The game lasts for five turns. Should neither player have achieved the Regicide objective at the end of turn five, a sixth and final turn is played.

Victory Conditions
Primary Objectives
Regicide: If a side destroyed the opponent's Warlord and any attached retinue deployed in the Forward Deployment Zone, they gain 5 Victory points.

Survival: If a side's Warlord has survived to the end of the game, they gain 3 Victory points.

Secondary Objectives
Slay the Warlord: If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, they gain 1 extra Victory point.*

First Strike: Any enemy unit destroyed in the first game turn earns 1 Victory point.

Last Man Standing: The side with the greatest number of surviving units at the end of the game gains 1 extra Victory point.

**Note that this is in addition to any points gained via Regicide, etc.*

Mission Special Rules
- **Night Fighting**
- **Reserves**
- **The Risk is too Great**
- **Honour Demands**

The Risk is too Great: *Neither side is willing to risk accidentally hitting their own commander in the initial desperate scramble to disengage between the participants of the parley.*

During the first game turn, neither Warlord (nor any unit to which they were attached at the beginning of the game) may be the target of any kind of attack, charge move or Malediction Psychic Power.

Honour Demands: *Slighted by the effrontery of their opposite number, the commanders refuse to back down.*

During this mission, both players' Warlords have the Fearless and Counter-attack special rules.

Deception Phase Mission 2 – The Snare

'Under the eyes of heaven, it is known by every emperor that his works will come to ruin. The eagle flies over the faded dreams of emperors past. Under the light of the moon, the names of emperors' sons cry out and are forgotten in turn. Only heroic deeds bear remembering.'

Ancient Chogorian proverb, c. Heng Dynasty

Whole battalions of Imperial soldiery and entire Brotherhoods of the White Scars were lost due to strange and inexplicable circumstances throughout the Chondax Cleansing. Often, these losses were attributed to natural disasters or the depredations of the feral Orks thought to have gone to ground in hiding holes throughout the system. It is now known that these attacks were instigated or actively executed by the Alpha Legion. The common identifying traits of such attacks are the geography upon which they occurred and the means used to drive the White Scars into an assigned kill-box. Most frequently, the Alpha Legion struck when the Loyalist forces were navigating through a natural defile, or passing into a steep-sided caldera or dry river basin. On Phemus IV, one of the earliest discovered incidents of such an attack involved a lava flue passage and the triggering of a micro-eruption to drive the 8th Battalion of the Saturnyne Rams into an Alpha Legion ambush. In the channel ravines of Orlikan, deep inside the ruins of the Orkoid stronghold Muttgrund, a series of linked explosives caused the collapse of the fortress in sequenced sectors, forcing the Brotherhood of the Mountain Peak towards the hidden gun emplacements of the Alpha Legion.

This mission represents the unsuspecting Ensnared being drawn into a trap laid by the Deceivers. With only destruction behind them, the play area shrinks allowing no path of retreat, the Ensnared are drawn further onto the swords of the Deceivers in their attempt to avoid a greater disaster.

The Armies

Choose your armies as described in the Campaign Rules section.

Setting up the Game

- Use the deployment map shown.
- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

Deployment

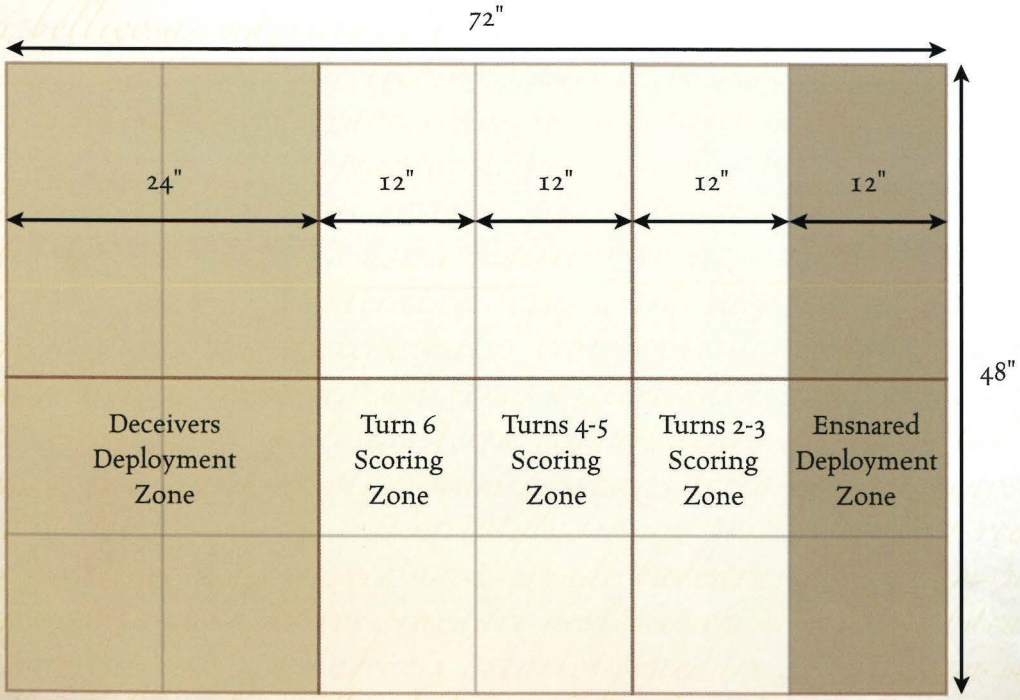
- The Deceivers player first deploys their entire force except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- The Ensnared player then deploys their entire force except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying Infiltrators and Scouts, etc., are as found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*.

First Turn

The Deceivers player has the first turn, unless the Ensnared player can Seize the Initiative.

Game Length

This game lasts for six turns.



Victory Conditions

Primary Objectives:

No Alternatives: The Ensnared player gains 1 Victory point at the start of each of their player turns for every scoring unit in an active scoring zone which has no enemy scoring units in it on that turn, so long as that unit is not locked in combat, Falling Back or embarked within a transport. On turn 6, the Ensnared player's units with the Infantry, Jump Infantry, Bike, Jetbike or Skimmer unit types are also scoring.

Death Toll: At the end of the game, the Deceivers player gains 1 Victory point for each unit they have destroyed or that is falling back at the end of the game.

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord: If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, they gain 1 extra Victory point.

Attrition: The side which has destroyed the highest number of enemy units at the end of the game gains D3 extra Victory points.

Mission Special Rules

- **Night Fighting**
- **Reserves**
- **No Retreat**
- **No Respite**

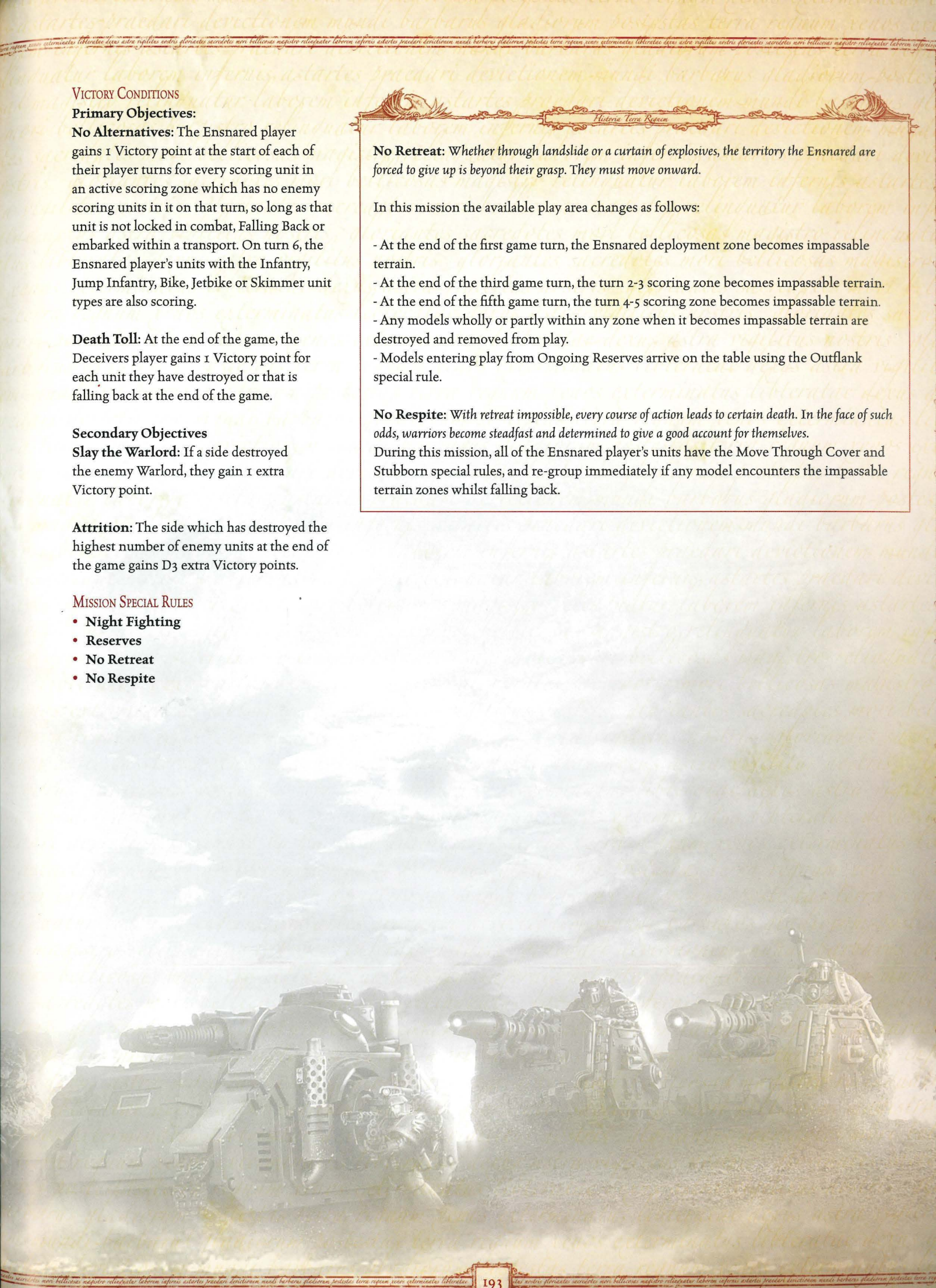
Historia Terra Regnum

No Retreat: *Whether through landslide or a curtain of explosives, the territory the Ensnared are forced to give up is beyond their grasp. They must move onward.*

In this mission the available play area changes as follows:

- At the end of the first game turn, the Ensnared deployment zone becomes impassable terrain.
- At the end of the third game turn, the turn 2-3 scoring zone becomes impassable terrain.
- At the end of the fifth game turn, the turn 4-5 scoring zone becomes impassable terrain.
- Any models wholly or partly within any zone when it becomes impassable terrain are destroyed and removed from play.
- Models entering play from Ongoing Reserves arrive on the table using the Outflank special rule.

No Respite: *With retreat impossible, every course of action leads to certain death. In the face of such odds, warriors become steadfast and determined to give a good account for themselves.*
During this mission, all of the Ensnared player's units have the Move Through Cover and Stubborn special rules, and re-group immediately if any model encounters the impassable terrain zones whilst falling back.



Deception Phase Mission 3 – The Break

'Caution is a luxury. There is no sense in reserving one's strength for later, presupposing the battles of tomorrow. To survive today is to give all. Now is the time to do or die.'

Attributed to Colonel Naeth of the 42nd Seraphine Guard, moments before the Hetenborg Hill Massacre

When surprised by the sudden appearance of a determined foe, a primordial choice is awoken in Mankind – the instinct of fight or flight. In the Chondax system, upon encountering the aggression of an unanticipated Alpha Legion assault, the choice to flee was a common recourse. Whether retreating in tactical formation under the cover of linked elements, or scattering in terror from the unrestrained predacity of the XXth Legion, Imperial forces that disengaged under heavy fire were chased and run down. Furthermore, in the hours after the Khan's recall of the White Scars forces, the Alpha Legion tipped their hand. Gathering into battlegroups of overwhelming strength, they pounced on the encampments of Imperial forces reorganising near secured landing zones, forcing these into a last-ditch rush for their evacuation craft, and cutting their quarry down before they could embark whilst destroying any means of orbital transit. Stragglers attempting to flee were picked off at the leisure of the Alpha Legion forces.

This mission represents the choice made by many Ensnared commanders to attempt flight when confronted with the unexpected appearance of a hostile force of Deceivers. The Ensnared forces make a last ditch attempt to break from a confrontation they cannot win, attempting escape in their desperation to survive.

The Armies

Choose your armies as described in the Campaign Rules section, with the exception that neither side may have units enter play using the Deep Strike special rule.

Setting up the Game

- Use the deployment map shown.
- Set up terrain for the battlefield; you may wish to have a greater terrain density between the Deceivers and Ensnared players' deployment zones, and less terrain density between the Ensnared player's deployment zone and the Escape Zone.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

Deployment

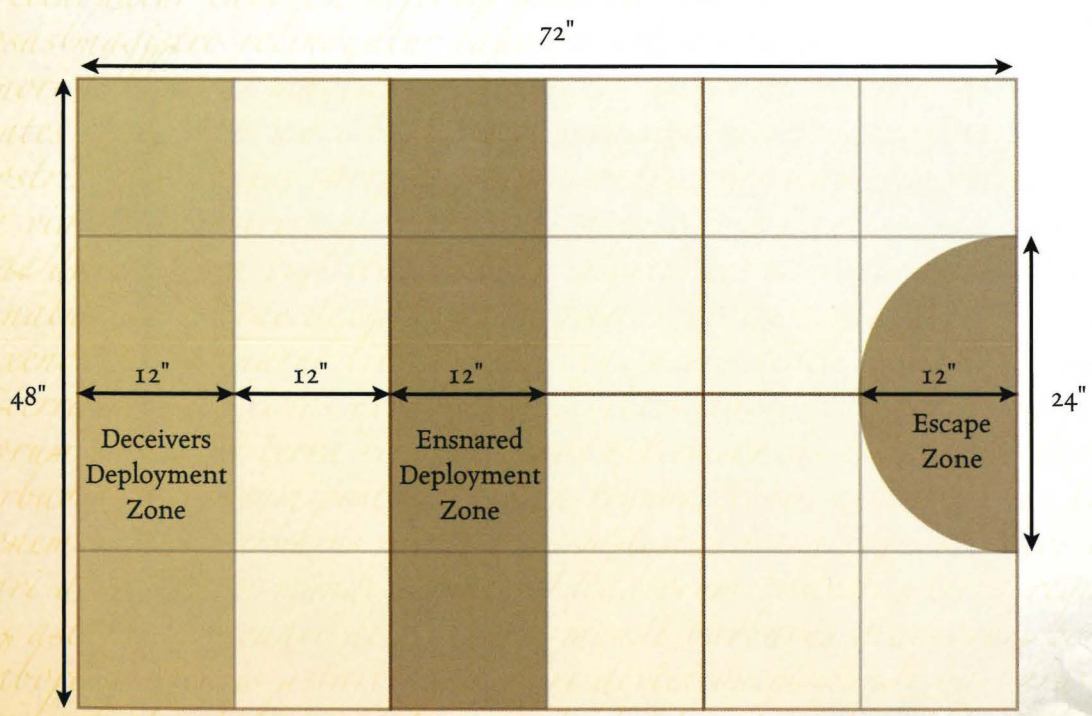
- The Ensnared player first deploys their entire force, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- The Deceivers player then deploys their entire force, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying Infiltrators and Scouts etc., are as found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook.*

First Turn

The Ensnared player has the first turn, unless the Deceivers player can Seize the Initiative.

Game Length

Variable Game Length:
After five turns, roll a D6. On the roll of a 4+, a sixth and final turn is played.



Victory Conditions

Primary Objectives

Escape!: At the end of the game, for each of the Ensnared player's scoring units that is not Falling Back or engaged in combat which has at least one model which is fully inside of the Escape Zone, the Ensnared player gains 2 Victory points.

Deny the Warlord: If the Deceivers player fails to achieve the Herald of Ruin Primary Objective, the Ensnared player gains 1 Victory point.

Herald of Ruin: If the Deceivers player's Warlord finishes the game in the Escape Zone the Deceivers player gains an additional D3 Victory points.

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord: If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, they gain 1 extra Victory point.

First Strike*: Each enemy unit destroyed in the first game turn gains the Deceivers 1 Victory point.

Attrition*: At the end of the game, if the Deceivers player has destroyed more units than the Ensnared player, the Deceivers gain 1 additional Victory point.

**Note that the rewards for these Secondary Objectives are only available to the Deceivers in this mission.*

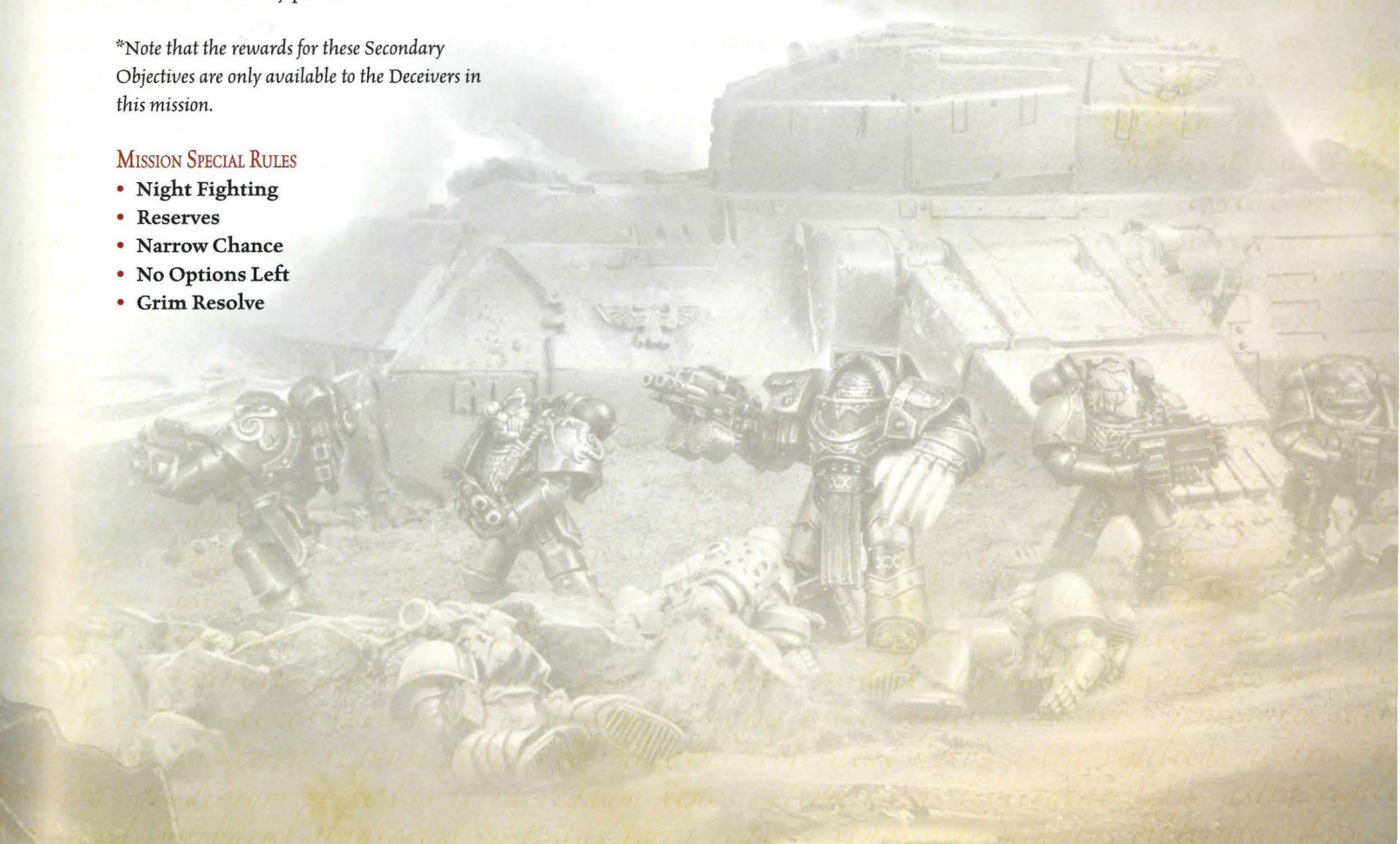
Mission Special Rules

- **Night Fighting**
- **Reserves**
- **Narrow Chance**
- **No Options Left**
- **Grim Resolve**

Narrow Chance: *Warriors are capable of breaking out and finding safe hiding places in small groups, where armour would only draw enemy attention.*
For the purposes of this mission, instead of the usual rules for scoring units, all units with either the Legiones Astartes rule or Infantry unit type (or both) are considered to be scoring units. Units within transports may not score.

No Options Left: *The sudden need to retreat brooks no planning. Those who can flee, must.*
Any unit that wishes to make a Run move during this mission may choose to Run 6". Additionally, any unit which is forced to Fall Back must move towards the Escape Zone taking the shortest available path, instead of towards the controlling player's board edge.

Grim Resolve: *The warriors forced to break have only one available path and are wholly resolved to make their escape. Not all can survive; some must stand to cover the retreat of their comrades at all cost.*
Any of the Ensnared player's units with at least one model fully within the Escape Zone gain the Fearless special rule. Any of the Deceivers player's units which are Falling Back with at least one model fully within the Escape Zone are overwhelmed by the defenders and destroyed.



Destruction Phase Mission 1 – Tendrils of Doubt

'Doubt not the Emperor who sits on high, thy secret prayers can He hear. How can ye doubt, when from ancient stars thus cunningly He conveys soft whispers to thine ear.'

Excerpt from the Lectitio Divinatus recovered from the corpse of an officer of the Seraphine Guard

On the magma-scree slopes of Phemus IV, the Alpha Legion lit a number of decoy beacons to mask the launch of the macro-beacon from their hidden base. The White Scars Legion forces active on the moon were forced to split their attentions between these decoys, fully aware that the Alpha Legion's intent was to divide their forces and engage them whilst vulnerable. Whichever beacon the White Scars sacrificed their lives to obtain, the outcome was the same – all victories were pyrrhic, none of the decoy beacons had any true value. All was not lost, however, as the Alpha Legion were drawn out, and while these battles raged, their hidden fastness was revealed by the Brotherhood of the Sable Wolf, who struck at the true beacon, paving the way for the final climactic battle of the Chondax Engagement.

This mission represents the counter-attack made by the Ensnared against the Deceivers on the world of Phemus IV. Finally cognisant of the underhanded campaign waged against them, the Ensnared attempt to rally and make a decisive strike. However, the tendrils of subterfuge entwining them have created doubt as to the best course of action available.

The Armies

Choose your armies as described in the Campaign Rules section.

Setting up the Game

- Use the deployment map shown.
- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.
- This mission uses two Objective markers. The Deceivers player places both of these objectives at this stage. They must be placed at least 10" from either player's deployment zone, and may not be placed within 18" of one another or within 6" of a table edge.

Deployment

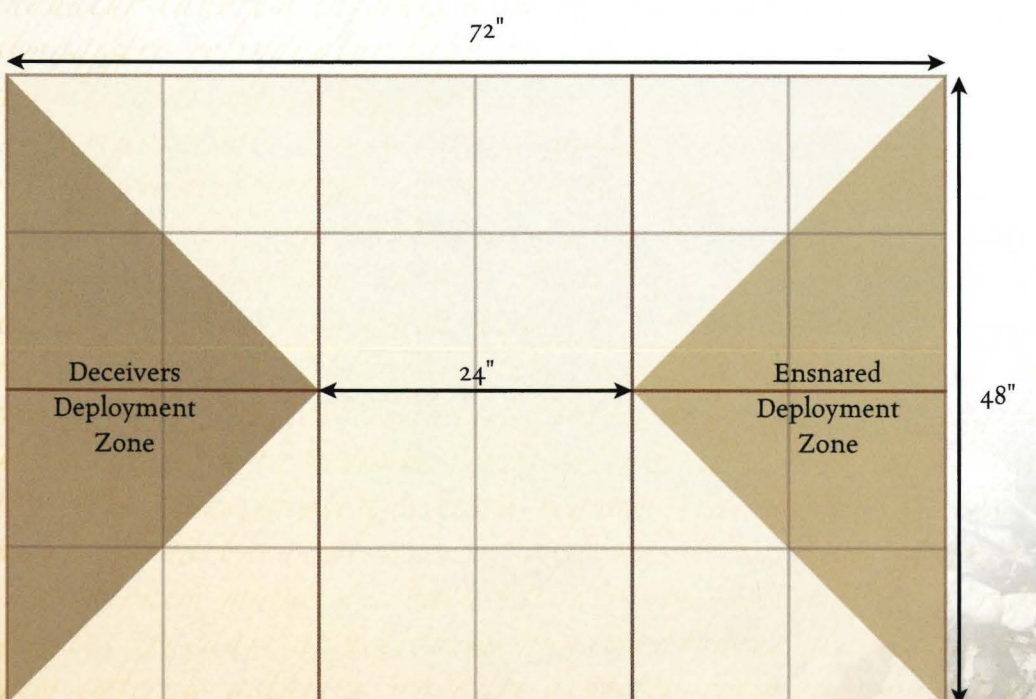
- Roll off. The winner may choose to deploy first or second.
- The player who deploys first then places their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- The player who is deploying second then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying Infiltrators and Scouts, etc., are as found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook.*

First Turn

The player who deployed first also has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative.

Game Length

Variable Game Length:
After five turns, roll a D6. On the roll of a 4+, a sixth and final turn is played.



Victory Conditions

Primary Objectives:

Tendrils of Doubt Objectives: After deployment but before rolling to Seize the Initiative, each player makes a note in secret of one Objective marker they choose to be their Primary Objective. Put this note to one side to be revealed at the end of the game. Players must attempt to control the Objective marker they have chosen at the end of the game, and these earn the player a number of Victory points.

- If both players have chosen the same Objective marker, the chosen Objective marker is worth 5 Victory points and the other Objective marker is worth 1 Victory point.
- If both players have chosen different Objective markers, each Objective marker is worth 4 Victory points to the player who chose it, and the other Objective marker is worth 2 Victory points.

Secondary Objectives

Slay The Warlord: If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, they gain 1 extra Victory point.

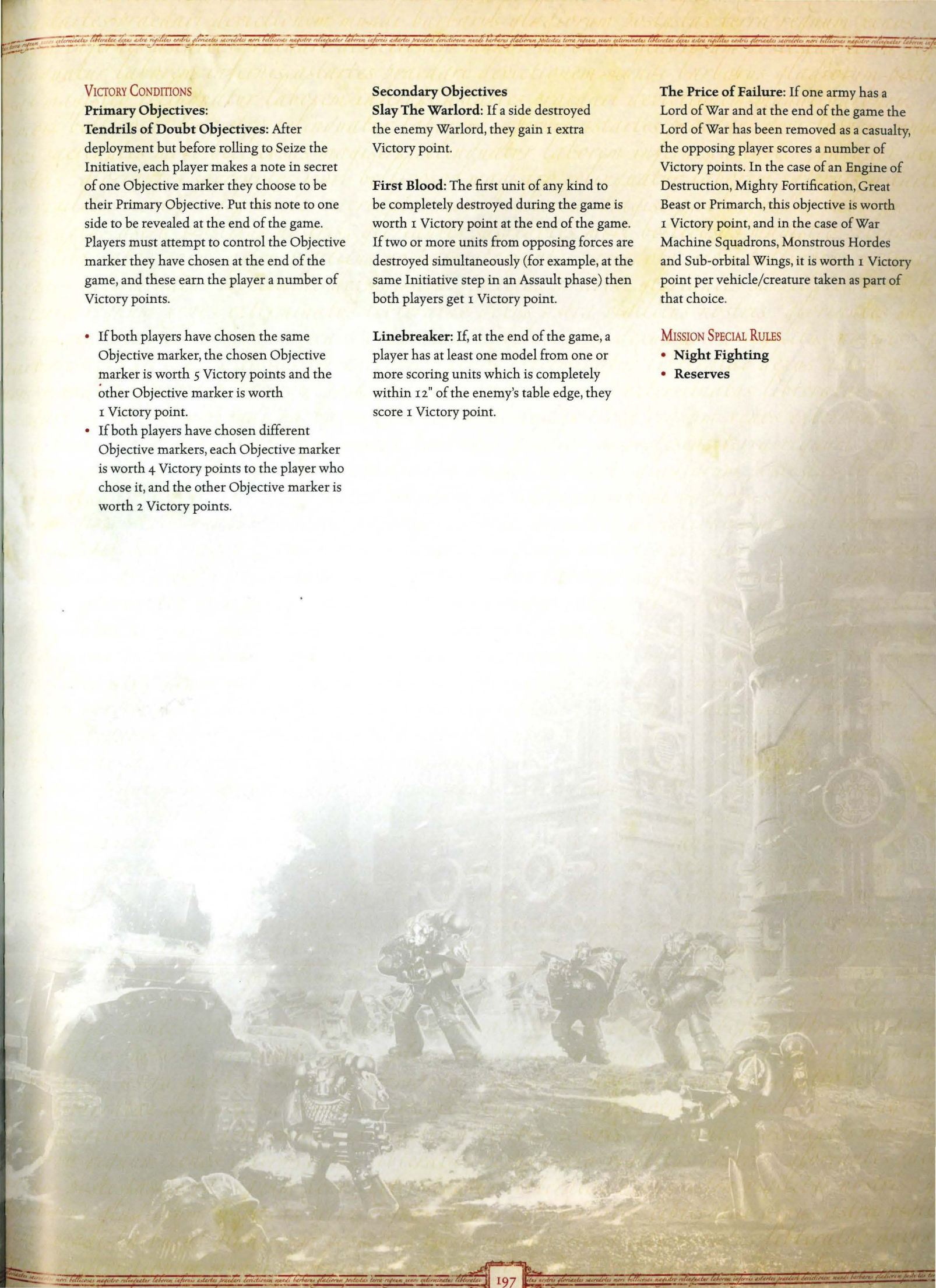
First Blood: The first unit of any kind to be completely destroyed during the game is worth 1 Victory point at the end of the game. If two or more units from opposing forces are destroyed simultaneously (for example, at the same Initiative step in an Assault phase) then both players get 1 Victory point.

Linebreaker: If, at the end of the game, a player has at least one model from one or more scoring units which is completely within 12" of the enemy's table edge, they score 1 Victory point.

The Price of Failure: If one army has a Lord of War and at the end of the game the Lord of War has been removed as a casualty, the opposing player scores a number of Victory points. In the case of an Engine of Destruction, Mighty Fortification, Great Beast or Primarch, this objective is worth 1 Victory point, and in the case of War Machine Squadrons, Monstrous Hordes and Sub-orbital Wings, it is worth 1 Victory point per vehicle/creature taken as part of that choice.

Mission Special Rules

- **Night Fighting**
- **Reserves**



Destruction Phase Mission 2 – Serpent Hunt

'There is no thrill greater than the hunting of a worthy rival. Those who have hunted their equal and felt that savage pleasure care for no other pursuit thereafter.'

Apocryphal

Upon arriving at Phemus IV and discovering the depths of the conspiracy wrought by the Alpha Legion, Jaghatai Khan's anger was aroused to devastating effect. His full wrath was brought about through his sons – waves of massed squadron assaults launched against the Alpha Legion's revealed base. Rapidly mustering the full weight of their arsenal, The White Scars struck across Phemus IV, neutralising Alpha Legion hunting parties and supply convoys as well as dealing grave damage to their hidden holdfasts. This assault allowed the White Scars to finally engage in open and honest war, laughing all the while they killed.

The Khagan himself deployed to Phemus IV with his Keshig bodyguard, falling upon the Alpha Legion in his personal hunt to find his brother, Alpharius, and wring from his throat the method behind the madness which led them to war against one another. Chasing down every potential clue to Alpharius' whereabouts, the Primarch of the White Scars executed several of the Alpha Legion's officers masquerading as the Hydra. The XXth Legion, for their part, fought with calculated determination, making only necessary sacrifices in their efforts to delay and misdirect the Khagan's hunt, drawing him from one decoy to another, increasing his rage and frustration.

This mission represents the Ensnared's final assault on the Deceivers' hidden fastness of Phemus IV. The Ensnared are afforded the chance to draw blood openly in their pursuit of answers for the Deceivers' crimes. They must strike hard and fast to take their vengeance and to identify the leader of their enemy, racing to obtain what knowledge they can before it is suppressed and lost forever.

The Armies

Choose your armies as described in the Campaign Rules section.

Setting up the Game

- Use the deployment map shown.
- Set up terrain for the battlefield.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

Deployment

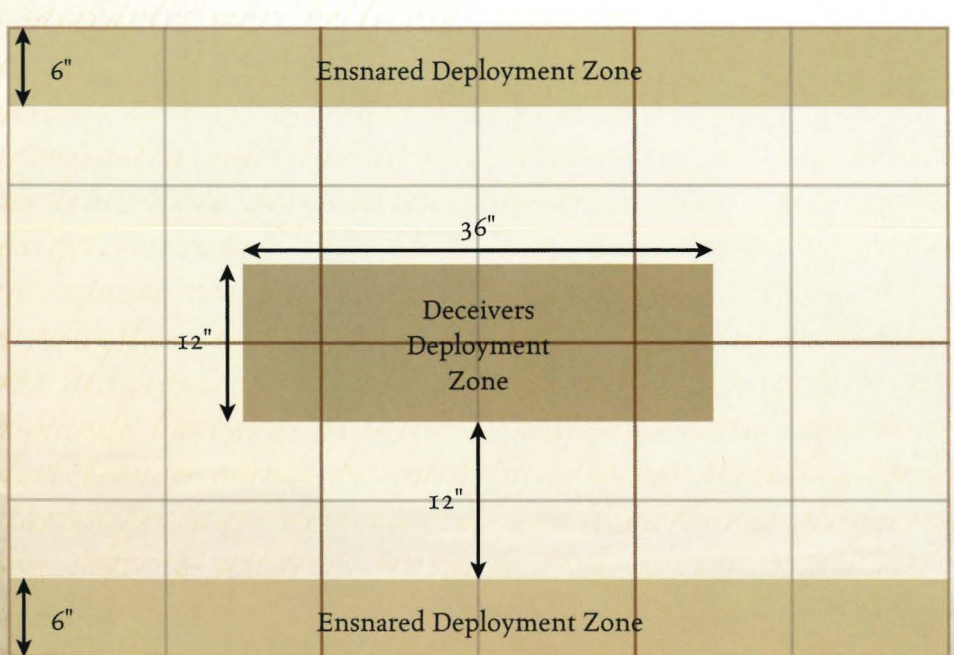
- Roll off. The winner may choose to deploy first or second.
- The Deceivers player does not deploy their Warlord in this mission.
- The player who deploys first then selects their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- The player who is deploying second then deploys their entire force, including any fortifications they possess, except for any units held in Reserve, into their deployment zone.
- Rules for deploying Infiltrators and Scouts, etc., are as found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*.

First Turn

The Ensnared player has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative.

Game Length

The game lasts six turns.



Victory Conditions

Primary Objectives

Serpent Hunt: The Ensnared player earns 2 Victory points when the Deceivers player's Warlord is revealed.

The Ensnared player earns a further 3 Victory points for slaying the Deceivers player's Warlord. This is in addition to any points earned through the Slay the Warlord and The Price of Failure Secondary Objectives.

Hidden in Plain Sight: The Deceivers player earns 3 Victory points if their Warlord is not revealed during the course of the game.

Secondary Objectives

Slay the Warlord: If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, they gain D3 extra Victory points.

Attrition: The side which has destroyed the highest number of enemy units at the end of the game gains 1 extra Victory point.

The Price of Failure: If one army has a Lord of War, and at the end of the game the Lord of War has been removed as a casualty, the opposing player scores a number of Victory points. In the case of an Engine of Destruction, Mighty Fortification, Great Beast or Primarch, this objective is worth 2 Victory points, and in the case of War Machine Squadrons, Monstrous Hordes and Sub-orbital Wings, it is worth 1 Victory point per vehicle/creature taken as part of that choice.

Mission Special Rules

- **Night Fighting**
- **Reserves**
- **The Serpent Within**

The Serpent Within: *The Hydra has many heads, any one of which could be the Primarch himself.*

In this mission, the Deceivers player's Warlord must deploy as follows (note that the Warlord may not deploy through any other means including but not limited to being held in reserve or making use of the One of Many special rule):

- After both sides have deployed, but before the game begins, the Deceivers player should secretly note down on a piece of paper which of their eligible units the Warlord has concealed himself within, and then place this note to one side until it is called for.
- Eligible units for use in conjunction with this special rule are any units with the Infantry unit type in the army's Primary Detachment.
- When revealed, the Warlord immediately replaces a single rank and file model in the noted unit which is not a Character unless the Character model is the last model available in the squad. Note that they may never replace an Independent Character model.

In this mission, the Deceivers player's Warlord may only be revealed as follows (they may not be revealed though any other means):

- If the unit concealing the Warlord is forced to Fall Back, the Warlord is immediately revealed and the unit ignores the need to Fall Back.
- If the unit the Warlord is concealed in makes a successful charge move, or is successfully charged, the Warlord is immediately revealed.
- If the unit the Warlord is concealed in is destroyed, the Warlord is immediately revealed and takes the place of the last model in that unit to have been slain.

Any army-wide bonuses which the Warlord provides while they are on the table (such as Warlord Traits) are active regardless of whether the Deceivers player's Warlord is concealed or revealed in this mission. However, any special rules possessed by the Warlord (such as Fearless) do not confer to their squad while the Warlord is concealed.

The Deceivers player's Warlord is Fearless for the duration of this mission.

Legiones Astartes Appendix: The Blood Angels

Age of Darkness Army List Appendix IX: The Blood Angels

"The mask I wear is the face of my Legion, the honour of my Primarch and the last oath of the fallen. By my pledge it shall not be tarnished by the sin of mercy, for the Angel's foes deserve none."

The Oath of the Erelim, the Angel's Tears

Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels)

The Space Marines of the Emperor's Legions are genetically engineered, psycho-indoctrinated warriors with superhuman abilities and minds and souls tempered for war. In addition, each individual Legion has its own idiosyncrasies and character – the product of their gene-seed and unique warrior culture.

The Blood Angels, of all the warriors of the Legiones Astartes, evidenced perhaps the greatest degree of transformation of their flesh from their human origins to the Space Marines they would become. This transformation's effects were even more pronounced and more fundamental than that of the Space Wolves or the Salamanders, both of which featured unique stigmata of their own. The aggressive over-writing of the aspirant's gene-helix by the blood of their Primarch was capable of transfiguring the rad-scarred and twisted inhabitants of Baal to create 'perfected' warriors, living icons of the physical ideal of the Legiones Astartes, each one an echo of their Primarch, called 'the Angel', Sanguinius in his fearsome glory. There was a price, however, for this power, and the process of transformation was a more arcane, elaborate and painful one than that endured by any other Legion. Even with the direct infusion of its Primarch's own blood to stabilise the process, the rate of fatalities among the Legion's aspirants was frighteningly high. There were also those who argued that the mental scars suffered by those who survived the change were just as deep, instilling a sense of cause and purpose that manifested as unflinching, unreasoning fanaticism bordering on madness, a certainty which could in mere moments turn to insane fury when that purpose was challenged.

In battle, the Blood Angels Legion was the incarnation of the Emperor's wrath upon those who rejected the gift of Unity, and their coming often nothing less than apocalyptic judgement delivered upon the guilty from on-high. Their arrival on a non-Compliant human world was heralded by blazing assaults on the strongest points of enemy resistance. Descending from the heavens on wings of fire, the Legion conquered by their preternatural fury as well as by the dread and awe they created. In the wake of their attacks, their chosen targets were scoured from existence and in their battle's witnessing, whole worlds fell to their knees cowering before the wrath and splendour of these 'red angels', lest they too perish beneath their burning blades. Against the xenos, no such quarter was given, and the wrath of the Blood Angels was as a tide of unrelenting carnage that only gave way once complete extermination had been achieved.

All models and units with this special rule are subject to the following provisions:

- **Legiones Astartes:** Units with this special rule may always attempt to Regroup at their normal Leadership value, regardless of casualties.
- **Encarmine Fury:** When fighting in an assault and using a Melee type weapon, any model with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule requires one lower result To Wound than they would normally, to a minimum of 2+. This effect applies regardless of the weapon they are using (for example, if using a Str 4 Melee weapon and attacking a target with a Toughness of 4, the Blood Angel will require a 3+ To Wound, rather than the usual 4+).
- **Without Remorse, Without Relent:** Models with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule must always make Sweeping Advances if they are able to, and may not voluntarily Go to Ground.
- **Host of Angels:** With the exception of Dedicated Transports, a Blood Angels Detachment may not have more units with the Vehicle type than it has units with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule. Note that because of this, certain Rites of War may be unavailable to Blood Angels armies.

Legion Specific Wargear

The Blood Angels Legion has access to the following items of special wargear:

The Fires of Heaven

The Legion's tactical doctrines were heavily focused on the use of powerful shock assaults to shatter an enemy's resistance in a single, devastating blow. Because of this, flamer and melta weaponry was strongly favoured, both because of its effectiveness and its ability to provide a fearsome display in action.

- Any model with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule with access to a volkite serpenta as part of their wargear options may instead take a hand flamer for +15 points.
- Any model with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule with access to a plasma pistol as part of their wargear options may instead take an inferno pistol for +15 points.
- Any Praetor, Centurion or Consul with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule with access to a power fist as part of their wargear options may instead take a Blade of Perdition for +20 points.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Hand flamer	Template	3	6	Pistol
Inferno pistol	6"	8	1	Pistol, Melta
Blade of Perdition	-	User	2	Melee, Master-crafted, Two-handed, Deathfire

Deathfire: Any model successfully wounded by a weapon with this type suffers two wounds for each hit instead of one. Roll to save against each wound separately. Wounds caused in excess of a given model's remaining Wounds do not spill over to other models.

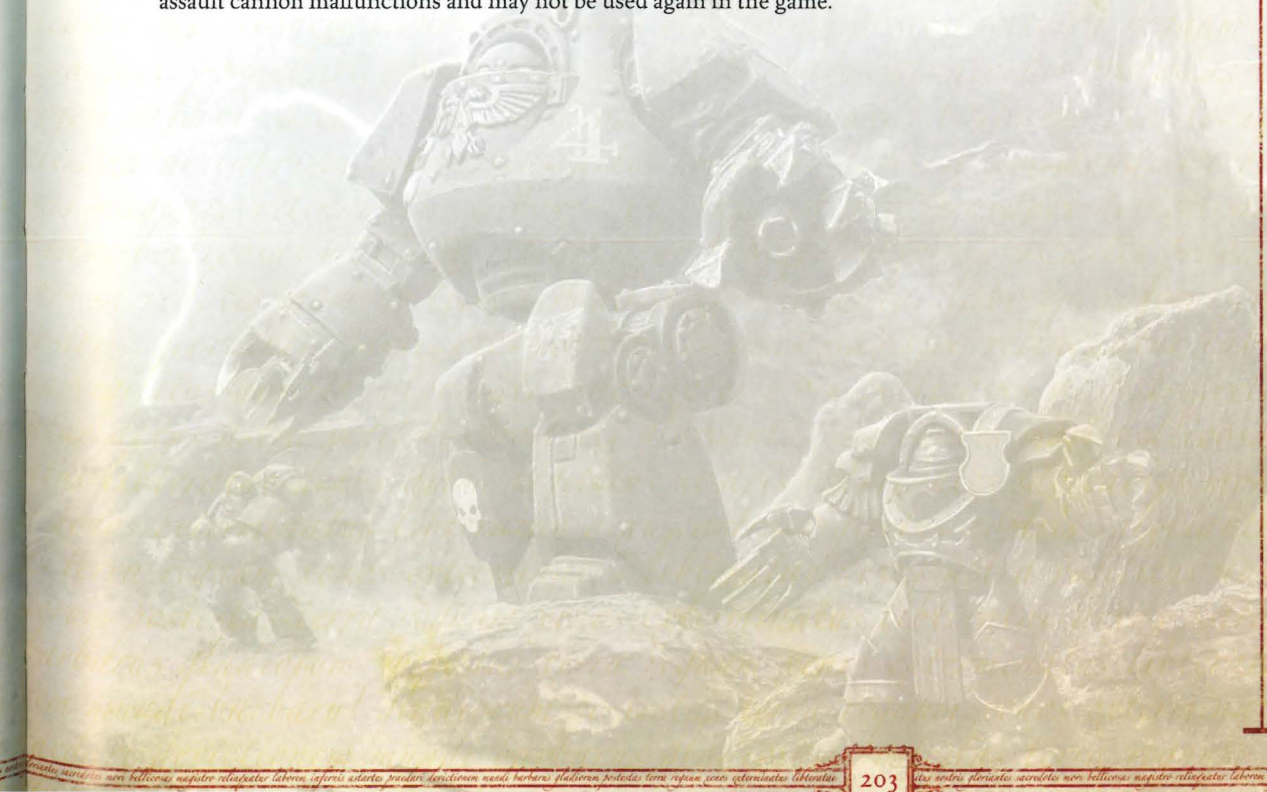
Prototype Weapon: Iliastus Pattern Assault Cannon

A prototype weapons system designed as a more compact and portable variant of the highly successful Kheres pattern, it was, as can be divined by its pattern designation, first developed on the Iliastus Satellite in the Sol System by the Dyzanique cult. This was a secretive organisation whose fealty to the Emperor predated His alliance with Mars.

Any Blood Angels model equipped with a heavy flamer may exchange it for an Iliastus pattern assault cannon for +5 points for Infantry models and +15 points for Vehicle models. This upgrade always uses the profile below regardless of whether the weapon being replaced is twin-linked or has any co-axial weapons. Legion Predator Tanks may also exchange their Predator cannon with a twin-linked Iliastus pattern assault cannon for +5 points.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Iliastus pattern assault cannon	24"	6	4	Heavy 4, Rending, Malfunction

Malfunction: When rolling To Hit with this weapon, if three or more results of '1' are rolled then the assault cannon malfunctions and may not be used again in the game.



"The roots of our Imperium are nourished by the blood of Angels. It is by our sacrifice that its people are made strong, and by our courage its reign made eternal."

Attr. Lord Raldoron of the Blood Angels prior to final translation to the Signus system

"The coin with which we buy our golden future is death, that of our foes brought low in battle and of our own people sacrificed on the altar of progress. Each death is a stone lain upon my soul, a wound borne with pride by my Legion, that our burden usher in the golden age that the Emperor has foreseen."

Attr. Sanguinius, in the Analects of Dawn

Blood Angels Unique Rite of War: The Day of Revelation

Throughout the Great Crusade, the IXth Legion became renowned for its 'wars of ultimatum'. These campaigns of open domination against non-Compliant worlds began with Sanguinius, or one of his Praetors, affording a world one opportunity to embrace Unification or face a 'Day of Revelation', in which they would suffer the fury of the Blood Angels unleashed. Many foes confronted by the gathered IXth Legion hosts were overcome with dread and awe, and capitulated without hesitation. Those who did not would see the shining countenance of the Angel Sanguinius transformed into savage fury as blinding destruction was delivered from on-high.

Effects

- **Cometh the Host:** Jump Infantry squads which are a part of this Detachment must arrive via Deep Strike on the first turn of the game and do not need to roll for Reserves.
- **With Fire & Thunder:** All Deep Striking units in this Detachment gain a 5+ cover save on the Game Turn they arrive in play. Place a marker by the unit or otherwise note this to be the case.
- **The Opening of the Seal:** All ranged weapons carried by Infantry and Jump Infantry units which are a part of this Detachment gain the Pinning special rule in the Shooting phase of any player turn in which they Deep Strike.
- **The Judgement of Angels:** All units which are a part of this Detachment and have the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule gain +1 Initiative on the turn they charge into an assault.
- **By Honour Bound:** Characters with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule must always accept a Challenge if one is offered in combat. If multiple eligible characters are present in the combat, the controlling player may choose which one answers the Challenge as normal.

Limitations

- Compulsory HQ and Troops choices for this Detachment must be made up of units equipped with jump packs.
- Detachments using this Rite of War must take a compulsory Fast Attack choice as part of their force which must also have either the Flyer or Deep Strike special rule.
- Primary Detachments using this Rite of War may not take any fortifications, Subterranean Assault units, Immobile units or Lords of War other than Flyers or the Primarch Sanguinius.

Blood Angels Unique Rite of War: The Day of Sorrows

Just as the IXth Legion was famed for their set-piece shock assault tactics, so they were also famed for their ability, when pressed, to stand against any who would overwhelm them, no matter the odds and no matter the foe, and even in their death throes, drag their enemies down with them to destruction. To even their brother Legiones Astartes, such feats of resilience sometimes seemed to border on the preternatural and could be laid to no single tactical plan nor doctrine nor biological trait, but rather had their origins within their unshakeable will to endure, as if somehow fuelled by the rage and grief wrought in their hearts by the deaths of their battle-brothers. To the Blood Angels themselves, such battles became known as the 'days of sorrows', when few would stand against many and sell their lives dear, their names and deeds to be reborn eternally in the most sacrosanct of the Legion's rites of battle and remembrance.

When the bulk of the Legion was missing for many years at Signus Prime, those few lone ships and garrisons which remained in an Imperium riven by war would find themselves time and again outnumbered by their foes. Many were their own days of sorrow, but far greater was the number of the Traitor foes who died along with them as they passed burning into the night.

Effects

- **Resolute Defence:** Any unit with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule which is a part of a Detachment which uses this Rite of War cannot be Pinned, and in addition is Fearless when within 3" of any objective or in their own deployment zone.
- **Aura of Wrath:** Any unit which suffers a Morale check as a result of losing an assault in which the majority of the enemy models have the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule, suffers an additional -1 penalty to their Leadership value when taking the test. Units which are immune to Fear are immune to this ability.
- **By Blood Sworn:** When any unit with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule which is a part of a Detachment which uses this Rite of War is reduced to 50% or less of its starting models, the remaining models gain the Feel No Pain (5+) special rule from the beginning of their next turn – this lasts for the remainder of the game.

Limitations

- **Bloody-handed:** Characters which are a part of this Detachment must issue and accept Challenges in combat where applicable. The Blood Angels player however may choose which of their characters does this if they have more than one in the combat.
- **To the Bitter Dregs:** Any unit with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule which is a part of a Detachment which uses this Rite of War that has been reduced to 50% or less of its starting number of models counts as being destroyed at the end of the game for the purposes of Victory points where these are used, and no longer counts as a scoring unit. Note that Independent Characters attached to these units are unaffected.

"In blood we find truth. In the blood we shed in battle is the truth of our conviction and in the blood of our foe is the truth of our destiny. Our truth is written in blood."

Excerpt from the Liturgy of the Blood, Stanza 7

Even within a Legion whose skills in the arts of orbital strike and shock assault are legendary, the Dawnbreaker cohorts stand apart. Chosen from amongst the most experienced and daring of the Legion's assault squads, the Dawnbreakers are trained and equipped to act as the tip of the Blood Angels' spear, the first warriors to set foot on those benighted worlds that the Legion is called upon to save. Lacking the versatility of standard tactical or assault units, the Dawnbreakers have one purpose in battle, to sunder the enemy's lines and tear the heart from its formation. Armed with lances and blades wreathed in keen-edged power fields, there are few warriors who can stand in the face of such an onslaught.

Standard combat doctrine among these elite warriors emphasises not only martial excellence, but also the symbolic nature of their role, bringing light and justice to even the most hellish war zones of the fledgling Imperium. Indeed, the common name by which they are known is inherited from their preferred tactic – an assault staged en masse from orbit just as dawn breaks, Sanguinius at their head with white wings spread wide. No few worlds still speak in awe of the day angels fell from the dawn skies to free them from the oppression of tyrants and xenos alike.

Dawnbreaker Cohort

210 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Dawnbreaker Legionary	5	4	4	4	1	4	2	8	2+
Dawnbreaker Champion	5	4	4	4	1	4	3	9	2+

Unit Composition
- 4 Dawnbreaker Legionaries
- 1 Dawnbreaker Champion

Unit Type
- Dawnbreaker Legionary: Jump Infantry
- Dawnbreaker Champion: Jump Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Artificer armour
- Falling-star pattern power spear
- Grenade dischargers (with frag & krak munitions)
- Jump pack

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels)
- Set the Sky Aflame

Options
- The Dawnbreaker Cohort may take:
  - Up to 5 additional Dawnbreaker Legionaries.....+25 points each
- Any model in the squad may exchange their Falling-star pattern power spear for an:
  - Equinox power-blade case..... +5 points per model
- The entire squad may take melta bombs .....+25 points
- The Dawnbreaker Champion may exchange their Falling-star power spear for a:
  - Blade of Perdition .....+20 points

Set the Sky Aflame: If this unit enters play via Deep Strike all enemy units within 6" immediately suffer D6 Str 4 AP - hits. Roll once to determine the number of hits applied to all units within range.

Falling-star Pattern Power Spears

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Falling-star spear	Melee	+1/User*	2/3*	Melee, Two-handed

**The first value is used on any turn in which the wielder has charged. The second value on turns in which the wielder has not charged.*

Equinox Power blade Case

An Equinox power blade case is a pair of Melee weapons, each with a different profile as listed below. In any given Assault phase, the wielder must choose one of the following two profiles before making any Attacks, and all their attacks in that phase will use the chosen profile and gain the additional attack for using two combat weapons.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Equinox power blade				
(Sunrise blade)	Melee	User	3	Melee, Shred, Keen
(Sunset blade)	Melee	User	3	Melee, Rending, Sunder

Keen: When attacking with this weapon, the user adds +1 to their Initiative value.

Grenade Discharger

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Grenade discharger				
(Frag)	12"	3	6	Assault 1, Blast (3")
(Krak)	12"	6	4	Assault 1

Crimson Paladins

160 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Crimson Paladin	4	4	4	4	1	4	2	10	2+
Crimson Exemplar	4	4	4	4	2	4	3	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 2 Crimson Paladins
- 1 Crimson Exemplar

Unit Type
- Crimson Paladins: Infantry
- Crimson Exemplar: Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Cataphractii Terminator armour
- Power weapon
- Coriolis pattern power shield

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels)
- Deep Strike
- The Blood is Forever
- Stubborn

Dedicated Transport
- A Crimson Paladin Squad numbering five models or less may take a Land Raider Phobos as a Dedicated Transport.

Options
- The Crimson Paladin Squad may take:
  - Up to 2 additional Crimson Paladins ..... +40 points each
- Any model in the squad may exchange its power weapon for a:
  - Sunset blade (see page 206) ..... Free
- A single Crimson Paladin in the squad may exchange their Coriolis power shield for one of the following weapons:
  - Iliastus pattern assault cannon ..... +10 points per model
  - Heavy flamer ..... +5 points per model
  - Plasma blaster ..... +15 points per model
- Up to two Crimson Paladins may exchange their power weapon for a:
  - Power fist ..... +20 points per model
- The Crimson Exemplar may exchange both their power weapon and Coriolis power shield for a:
  - Blade of Perdition ..... +10 points
- The Crimson Exemplar may take a grenade harness ..... +10 points

The Blood is Forever: While locked in combat with a unit that outnumbers them, a Crimson Paladin squad gains the Feel No Pain (5+) special rule. If outnumbered by more than twice their own number then they instead gain the Feel No Pain (4+) special rule. Any Independent Characters that join this squad do not gain this special rule and do not count for the purposes of determining when the squad is outnumbered. Each Crimson Paladin and Crimson Exemplar is counted as two models (as are any enemy models with the Bulky rule, models with other versions of the Bulky special rule count as the number of models they would for purposes of Transport Capacity).

Coriolis Pattern Power Shields: Reduce the Strength of all Melee attacks targeting a model with a Coriolis power shield by -1.

ELITES

The Crimson Paladins stand as the guardians of the Primarch's halls, a grim counterpart to the Golden Seraphs, the Sanguinary Guard. When these warriors take to the field, clad in the reliquary armour of their Order and cloaked in the names of the immortals, they stand as a bulwark against the foe and a shield for the sons of Sanguinius. They form the unyielding anchor upon which the Crimson Host turns; a single unshakeable bastion of blades and power shields. By their sacrifice and indomitable resolve are the Blood Angels freed to give vent to the noble fury of their Legion.

Also known within the obscure dogma of the IXth Legion as the Keruvim, or the Storm Winds, the Crimson Paladins are one of the warrior Orders of the First Sphere. As with the other First Sphere Orders, they forsake name and rank to assume an identity and role that subsumes all sense of self and leaves them with only the singular duty assigned them. Such a sacrifice, made in the name of the Great Angel and for the sake of their brothers, bolsters the resolve of these warriors to the point that no threat or dire fate can turn them from their purpose. It is commonly held within the Legion that no warrior who wears the armour of a Paladin has ever taken a step backwards while the IXth Legion bears arms in righteous combat.

ELITES

The Angel's Tears, who carry the rank and title of Erelim, the Silver Masks and the Hands of Justice, serve the IXth Legion in place of the more common Destroyers of other Legions. They take to the field of war only at the direct command of Sanguinius himself, serving as his agents on those rare occasions when the Great Angel deems an enemy worthy only of annihilation. Armed with weapons best suited to the swift culling of those unworthy of a place in the Emperor's bright new Imperium, they descend upon the foe suddenly and unannounced, faces concealed in the silver death-masks of their Order and oaths of retribution on their lips.

As with the other Orders of the First Sphere of the Blood Angels, the Angel's Tears surrender their names and identities for the term of their service, taking one of the ritual names that identifies them as a true Angel of Death, a bringer of destruction and remorseless killer. Such ritual trappings stem from the teachings of Sanguinius himself, owing their origins to neither Terra nor Baal, a product of his own wisdom. They serve to insulate his warriors from the death they cause, for when a member of the Erelim puts aside his mask and returns to the ranks of the Legion under his old name, he bears no lingering taint for the slaughter and destruction caused by the Erelim whose mantle he bore.

The Angel's Tears

130 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Erelim	4	4	4	4	1	4	1	9	3+
Arch-Erelim	4	4	4	4	1	4	2	9	3+

Unit Composition
- 4 Erelim
- 1 Arch-Erelim

Unit Type
- Erelim: Jump Infantry
- Arch-Erelim: Jump Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Power armour
- Chainsword or combat blade
- Frag, krak and rad grenades
- Two volkite serpenta
- Jump pack

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels)
- Counter-attack
- Hardened Armour

Options
- The Angel's Tears squad may take:
  - Up to 5 additional Erelim ..... +15 points each
- The entire squad may take melta bombs ..... +25 points
- Any Erelim in the squad may exchange one of their volkite serpenta for one of the following:
  - Angel's Tears grenade launcher ..... +15 points
  - Heavy flamer ..... +10 points
  - Iliastus pattern assault cannon and suspensor web ..... +15 points
  - Rotor cannon ..... +5 points
  - Heavy chainsword ..... +5 points
- The Arch-Erelim may exchange their chainsword/combat blade for one of the following:
  - Heavy chainsword ..... +5 points
  - Power weapon ..... +10 points
  - Power fist ..... +15 points
  - Single lightning claw ..... +15 points
  - Thunder hammer ..... +20 points
- The Arch-Erelim may exchange either of their volkite serpentas for a:
  - Plasma pistol ..... +10 points each
- The Arch-Erelim may upgrade their power armour to:
  - Artificer armour ..... +10 points

Legion Moritats may join an Angel's Tears unit as if it was a Legion Destroyer Squad. Also, any Rite of War that requires Destroyer units to be taken to fulfil any limitation or condition in a Blood Angels army may instead include Angel's Tears units as Destroyers.

Angel's Tears Grenade Launcher

A weapon spawned from the Unification Wars and the terror of Old Night, the rad grenade has proven well-suited to the Angel's Tears' role as purgers of sin, for while it eradicates the foes of the Blood Angels, it leaves the worlds they corrupted intact, waiting only for the time that they may be declared pure once again and worthy of hosting true servants of the Emperor once more.

This weapon is only equipped with rad grenades and does not fire any other type of grenade.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Grenade launcher				
- Rad grenades	24"	4	4	Assault 1, Blast (3"), Rad Phage, Fleshbane

Contemptor-Incaendius Class Dreadnought — 195 points

	WS	BS	S	Armour Front	Side	Rear	I	A	HP
Contemptor-Incaendius	5	5	7	13	12	10	4	3	3

Unit Composition
- 1 Contemptor-Incaendius Dreadnought

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Walker)

Wargear
- Two Talons of Perdition, each with in-built heavy flamer
- Smoke launchers
- Searchlight

Special Rules
- Atomantic Shielding
- Fleet
- Armoured Ceramite
- Incaendius Booster Pack

Options
- A Contemptor-Incaendius may replace any heavy flamer with one of the following:
  - Meltagun ..... +10 points per weapon
  - Iliastus pattern assault cannon ..... +15 points per weapon
- A Contemptor-Incaendius may replace either of its Talons of Perdition with a:
  - Dreadnought close combat weapon ..... Free (this does not change any in-built heavy flamers, meltaguns or Iliastus pattern assault cannon)
- A Contemptor-Incaendius may take extra armour ..... +10 points

Incaendius Booster Pack: The booster pack may be used once per game in one of two ways; these options are mutually exclusive and the use of one means the other may not be used in that game:

- **Deep Strike:** The controlling player may choose to use this special rule to set up the Dreadnought in reserve and bring it into play using the Deep Strike special rule. The Dreadnought is considered to eject the booster pack via a system of explosive bolts after landing and it plays no further role in the Dreadnought's operation.

- **Shock Assault:** The controlling player may opt to deploy the Dreadnought as normal, in this case the use of the booster pack may be declared at the start of any of the controlling player's Movement phases, including the first, or during the controlling player's Assault phases (but not both). If activated during the Movement phase, the booster pack allows the Dreadnought to move up to 12", ignoring all other models and terrain freely. However, if the model begins or ends that Movement phase in difficult terrain, it must take a Dangerous Terrain test. If activated during the Assault phase, the booster pack allows the Dreadnought to roll 3D6 to determine its charge range, ignoring all other models and terrain freely. However, if the model begins or ends that Charge sub-phase in difficult terrain, it must take a Dangerous Terrain test. In either case, the Dreadnought is considered to eject the booster pack via a system of explosive bolts at the end of whichever phase it was used in and it plays no further role in the Dreadnought's operation.

Talon of Perdition

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Talon of Perdition	Melee	User	2	Melee, Deathfire

Deathfire: Any model successfully wounded by a weapon with this type suffers two wounds for each hit instead of one. Roll to save against each wound separately. Wounds caused in excess of a given model's remaining Wounds do not spill over to other models.

FAST ATTACK

The Incaendius sub-class is a Contemptor Dreadnought chassis manufactured only within the Mechanicum enclave that clings to the irradiated surface of Baal's first moon, under ancient treaty with the great Forge of Anvillus. Similar in most respects to the widely used Contemptor chassis, the Incaendius differs in one key aspect: the external booster pack secured to its back. This volatile, single-burn magneto-plasma engine is powerful enough to decelerate the Dreadnought in a fall from low orbit or to propel it in a shallow leap at significant velocity despite the bulk of its armour and ceramite endoskeleton. It serves the Blood Angels as a shock assault unit of unparalleled ferocity, for the half-dead warrior entombed within suffers none of the disorientation such tactics inflict on the living.

Most commonly, such vehicles are armed with weapons designed for battle at close ranges, with flamers and the so-called Talons of Perdition being preferred, though some have been known to employ prototype assault cannon. These weapons are well-suited to the Dreadnought's role, which is to secure a heavily contested drop zone for the Blood Angels infantry that follow on its heels. Those enemies that survive the impact of its arrival are given no opportunity to fortify their position or to fall back in good order.

Judiciar Aster Crohne

Last officer of the 94th Company, The Shroudmaker, The Ghost of Saiph

155 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Aster Crohne	5	5	4	4	3	5	3	10	2+

HQ

A veteran of the IXth Legion, having served in the days before the return of the Great Angel, Aster Crohne was recruited on the killing fields of Saiph. Few of those raised from the debased tribes of Saiph survived the battles that regularly laid waste to their world, and of those none other are known to have survived as many massacres and slaughters as Aster Crohne. A relic of a time and tradition that Sanguinius has oft lamented, Aster found little favour among the elite of the newly named Blood Angels and instead lingered in the role of Judiciar. While the bloody, practical skills he has perfected are the terror of the foe, his true talent has always been sheer bloody-minded tenacity and an instinct for survival that defies belief.

Of all of the officers attached to the Blood Angels 94th Company, only Aster emerged from the fires of Signus alive. While the finest of Terran and Baalite leaders were overcome by the warp-fugue and rage that followed in the wake of the Angel's fall, the only Saiphan recruit held to some semblance of sanity and led his brethren to glory. Despite this, the Shroudmaker remains an outcast among his peers, for those whose actions and weakness in the face of the foe still haunt them find his strength of will a keen reminder of their failings.

Unit Composition
- Judiciar Aster Crohne

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Artificer armour
- Two hand flamers
- Saiphan shard-axe
- Refractor field
- Frag, krak & rad grenades

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels)
- Independent Character
- Adamantium Will
- Scout
- Counter-attack
- The Ghost of Saiph
- Virtue of Judgement

This unit may only be taken as part of a Loyalist Faction army.

Saiphan Shard-axe

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Saiphan shard-axe	-	+1	3	Melee, Rending

The Ghost of Saiph

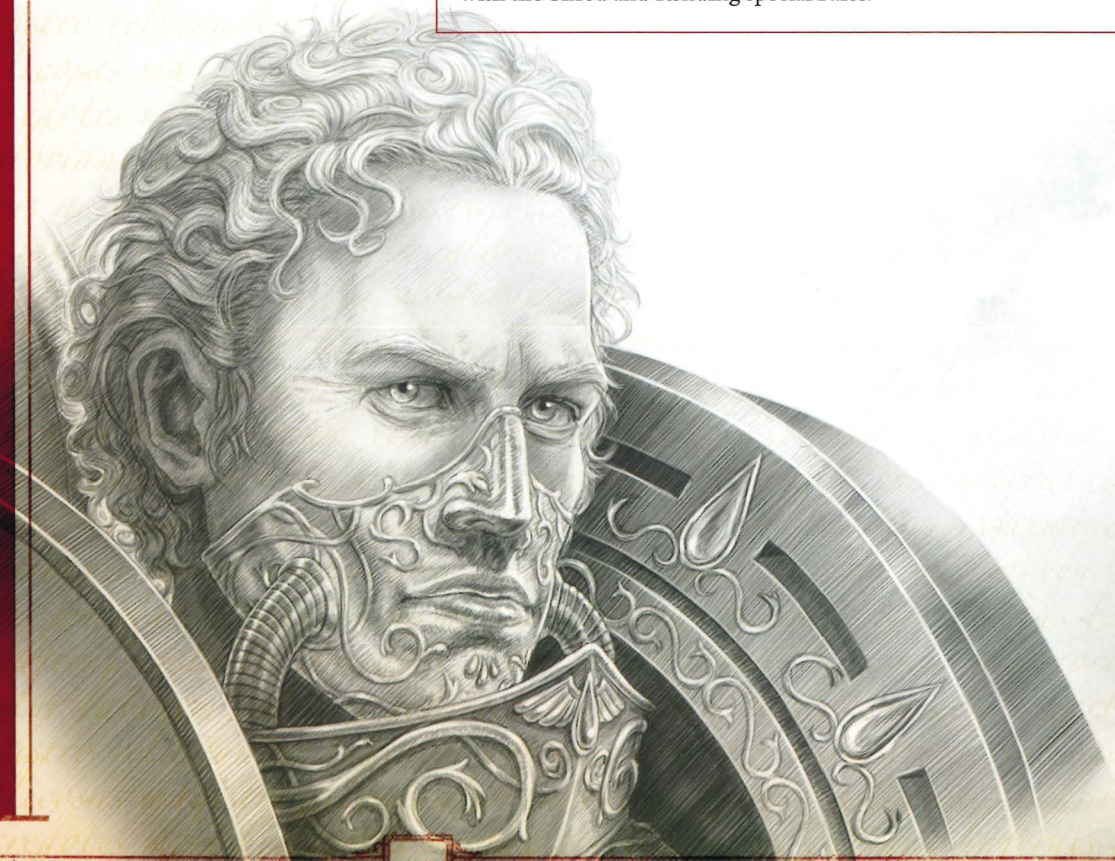
Aster Crohne has stood at the brink of death and destruction so many times and emerged from his ordeal unscathed that within the IXth Legion many consider him to lead a charmed, or perhaps cursed, life.

The first time Aster Crohne is reduced to 0 Wounds, or otherwise removed from play by any effect or attack, roll a D6. On a 4+, he is placed in Ongoing Reserves with a single Wound remaining instead of being removed or destroyed. If he enters Ongoing Reserves on or after turn 4, then he may enter play automatically at the start of the controlling player's following turn.

Virtue of Judgement

The Judiciars, like the Moritats of other Legions, bring terror and death to the enemy ahead of the main advance of the Legion. Sanguinius has long striven to change the role within his Legion, so that these warriors become agents of judgement, bringing his wrath to those he has chosen for death rather than spreading carnage freely.

At the start of the game, after deployment but before the first turn is declared, roll a D3. Aster Crohne's controlling player may select a number of enemy units equal to the number rolled to be marked by the Angel's Wrath. Whenever Crohne or a Destroyers or Angel's Tears unit is used to make a Shooting attack against a unit marked with the Angel's Wrath, his hand flamer attacks are made with the Shred and Rending special rules.



Chapter Master Raldoron

First Captain of the Blood Angels Legion, Equerry to the Primarch, Archein of Wisdom

180 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Chapter Master Raldoron	7	5	4	4	3	5	4	10	2+

Unit Composition
- Chapter Master Raldoron

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Artificer armour
- The Encarmine Warblade
- Combi-flamer
- Bolt pistol
- Iron halo
- Frag & krak grenades

This unit may only be taken as part of a Loyalist Faction army.

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels)
- Independent Character
- Master of the Legion
- Furious Charge
- Archein of Wisdom

The Encarmine Warblade

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
The Encarmine Warblade	-	+1	2	Melee, Master-crafted, Shred, Murderous Strike

Archein of Wisdom
Raldoron may pick his Warlord trait from the Legiones Astartes Army List Warlord Traits table.

HQ

First among the captains of the Blood Angels' Three Hundred Companies, Raldoron was respected throughout the Legion for his tactical and strategic insight, superb martial skills and faultless discipline. Of all his captains and aides, it is said that Sanguinius relied on his even temper and keen intelligence more than any other. Even among the other Legions of the Emperor's Space Marines, his reputation and record were spoken of with respect and admiration. Rogal Dorn himself is known to have referred to him as an '*Exemplar of the martial spirit of the Great Crusade*', at the end of the Malignax campaign.

In battle he is known to have favoured tried and tested weapons and tactics, those that brought the greatest chance for victory at the lowest cost to his Legion. His own wargear followed the same pattern, trusting more to the war-worn armour he had borne throughout the Great Crusade than any ornate ceremonial suit and wielding a simple, if artfully wrought, power blade. Some have seen such cautious tendencies as a weakness, especially his more audacious brethren, but his actions at Signus and battlefields throughout the years of the Horus Heresy speak of the advantages of his calm competency.

Sanguinius

The Great Angel, The Brightest One, Master of Hosts, Primarch of the Blood Angels

485 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Sanguinius	9	5	6	6	6	7	6	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Jump Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- The Regalia Resplendent
- Great Wings
- The Blade Encarmine *or* the Spear of Telesto and Moonsilver Blade
- Infernus
- Frag grenades

Special Rules
- Primarch (Independent Character, Eternal Warrior, Fear, Adamantium Will, Fleet, Fearless, It Will Not Die, Master of the Legion, Precision Strike, Precision Shot)
- Sire of the Blood Angels
- Angelic Presence
- Sky Strike
- Very Bulky

This unit may only be taken as part of a Loyalist Faction army.

Often considered to be the greatest of his kin, Sanguinius is a peerless warrior, masterful strategist and beloved hero of the Imperium. Among the Primarchs, there were few who would speak ill of him, with even grim figures such as Perturabo and Ferrus Manus offering grudging praise of their winged brother.

Many among that legendary brotherhood were surprised to find that the Emperor named Horus as the first among them, rather than choosing Sanguinius, and those who survived the Age of Darkness have been known to speculate that this was their father's great mistake. For even as the wars of the Horus Heresy tore the Imperium apart and set even the noblest of his brothers on dark paths, Sanguinius remained untarnished and resolute, a beacon of hope that outshone even the darkness of that age.

Sire of the Blood Angels
Sanguinius gains +1 Initiative and +1 Attack in the first turn of any combat. While Sanguinius is present on the battlefield, all friendly Jump Infantry units with the Legiones Astartes (Blood Angels) special rule may choose to use their Jump packs in both the Movement and Assault phases.

Dawnbreaker Squads may be chosen as Troops choices in an army in which Sanguinius is present.

Angelic Presence
Sanguinius inspired love in all who beheld him; such devotion drove his sons and allies to feats of heroism beyond all expectation.

Any friendly units within 3" of Sanguinius gain +D3 to the Wound value used to calculate if the unit has won a close combat.

The Regalia Resplendent
Thought to have been wrought by the Emperor's own hand, Sanguinius' ornately decorated suit of golden armour was designed with both function and form in mind, allowing him to move freely in flight while providing superlative protection. Sanguinius' wings, too, are so natural an extension of his form that he can use them to great advantage in combat, swooping away from enemy lunges or turning blades on his pinions.

The Regalia Resplendent provides a 2+ armour save and a 4+ invulnerable save, and allows him to re-roll any failed invulnerable saves on a turn in which he charges.

Great Wings
Alone amongst the Primarchs, the Emperor saw fit to bless Sanguinius with the aspect of a true angel of myth. Able to fly freely on these wings, they grant him great speed and power.

Sanguinius may always use his jump pack (representing his Great Wings) in both the Movement and Assault phases. When Sanguinius resolves Hammer of Wrath attacks, he does so at Str 10, AP 2.

When deploying via Deep Strike, Sanguinius and any unit he accompanies does not scatter.

Sky Strike
At the end of any Movement phase in which this model has moved using the Jump Pack rules, nominate one enemy unit not locked in combat that the model has moved over that turn. The unit takes one hit (if the unit is an enemy Flyer in Zoom mode or an enemy Swooping Monstrous Creature, it instead takes D3 hits). These hits are resolved at Str 6, AP 2, using Random Allocation and the Ignores Cover special rule. Against vehicles, these hits are resolved against the target's Side armour.

Infernus
Believed to be a weapon of unique provenance, Infernus can be best described as a compact archaeotech heat-beam emitter. The sheer potency of its energy generation reduces its own focussing mechanisms and barrel-assembly to dust upon discharge. These must be painstakingly replaced by a team of artificers after every battle.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Infernus	18"	8	1	Assault 2, One Use

The Blade Encarmine
A powerful broad-bladed sword, the Blade Encarmine was carried to glory by Sanguinius on a hundred worlds during the Great Crusade.

Sanguinius may be equipped with either The Blade Encarmine or the Spear of Telesto and Moonsilver Blade; his chosen armament must be declared before the game begins and clearly shown on the model.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
The Blade Encarmine	-	+1	2	Melee, Rampage, Shred

The Spear of Telesto and Moonsilver Blade
The Spear of Telesto was the favoured weapon of Sanguinius in shock assaults, where he would dive from the sky with his spear held aloft, breaking his foes in a single impaling thrust. He was also known to bear a silver longsword of exquisite craftsmanship, granted to him by his brother Rogal Dorn and said to be made of the same alloy as the skeleton of Phalanx.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Spear of Telesto	-	+3/User	1/2	Melee, Two-handed, Instant Death, Master-crafted, Wrath of Angels

Once per game, in the Shooting phase in lieu of making any other shooting attacks, Sanguinius may hurl the Spear of Telesto with the force of a bolt of angelic lightning, using the profile below. Should he choose to do this, he may not make further use of the Spear of Telesto for the remainder of the game:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Spear of Telesto (*Thrown*)	12"	7	1	Assault 1, Instant Death, Armourbane, Wrath of Angels

Wrath of Angels: For every successful Wound roll of a 6 made with the Spear of Telesto, that unit suffers an additional wound using the same weapon profile.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Moonsilver Blade	-	User	3	Melee, Master-crafted, Blind, Duellist's Edge, Moonsilver

Moonsilver: Any wound caused against a model with the Daemon, Daemon of the Ruinstorm or Psyker special rules is instead counted as two wounds. Wounds caused in excess of the model's remaining Wounds do not spill over to other models.

Legiones Astartes Appendix: The White Scars

Age of Darkness Army List Appendix V: The White Scars

"Whether the water is pure or muddied, it will still extinguish the fire."

From 'The wisdom of the Khans: Sayings and Tales of the Chogorian Legion', as recorded by Ilya Ravallion

Legiones Astartes (White Scars)

The Space Marines of the Emperor's Legions are genetically engineered, psycho-indoctrinated warriors with superhuman abilities and minds and souls tempered for war. In addition, each individual Legion has its own idiosyncrasies and character – the product of their gene-seed and unique warrior culture.

A bolt of lightning in clear skies, a sudden gale from an unexpected quarter – the White Scars are war's sudden and merciless onslaught. Swift action and a joy for the rush of combat and clash of blades are the hallmarks of their battles, tempered by a quiet and hidden wisdom that few took the time to uncover. White Scars thrive in the chaotic heart of battle, anticipating its vicissitudes and flowing with them, always to be found where the foe is weakest, where they were least expected, and leaving only cold corpses in their wake. They were the Great Crusade's pathfinders, the bleak wind that ran ahead of its serried armies culling the weak and harrying the strong that they might fall more easily to those who followed. There were many victories claimed by the Great Crusade that would not have been possible without the depredations caused by these warriors.

All models and units with this special rule are subject to the following provisions:

- **Legiones Astartes:** Units with this special rule may always attempt to Regroup at their normal Leadership value, regardless of casualties.
- **Swift Action:** On any turn in which a unit with this special rule ends the Movement phase at least 6" (or 12" if the unit is of the Bike or Jetbike type) from the point where it began the phase, it may, until the beginning of its controlling player's next turn, re-roll failed To Wound rolls of a 1 with all attacks.
- **The Eye of the Storm:** Renowned for their ability to arrive unannounced and unexpected, the White Scars use their mobility to dictate the flow of any battle in which they fight. An army whose Warlord has the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule may add +1 to the result to Seize the Initiative, as well as to the first Reserves roll of each turn.
- **To Laugh in Death's Face:** An army whose Primary Detachment has the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule may not select more Heavy Support choices than Fast Attack choices. This special rule does not apply when playing Zone Mortalis missions.
- **Born in the Saddle:** All models with the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule and the Bike or Jetbike unit type have the Skilled Rider special rule.

Legion Specific Wargear

The White Scars Legion has access to the following items of special wargear:

Legion Space Marine Shamshir Jetbike

A rare variant of the Scimitar Jetbike employed by the White Scars Legion for its increased speed and manoeuvrabilty, production of this variant Jetbike is limited to small Mechanicum enclaves established in the Kolarne Circle and maintained by ancient treaty with the White Scars and their enigmatic master.

Any Independent Character with the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) spcial rule which has access to a Scimitar Jetbike with a heavy bolter may instead take a Shamshir Jetbike with a Scatterbolt launcher for the same points cost.

Legion Space Marine Shamshir Jetbikes operate under the standard rules for Jetbikes found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*. Any character model that selects a Shamshir Jetbike as an option gains both +1 Toughness and improves its Armour save to 2+ if it is lower than this.

Power Glaive

Based on the ancient pole arms of Mundus Planus, the power glaive is as much a mark of status amongst the White Scars as it is a weapon of war. Known in the language of the steppes tribes led by Jaghatai Khan as the Rising Moon Blade, the weapon is known both for its intimidating weight as well as the graceful sweeping strikes that characterise its use. Many of the blades in use among the White Scars are ancient weapons fitted with power generators and field emitters for use in the Emperor's Great Crusade, and proved equally deadly against those who were once their brothers in the dark years of the Horus Heresy.

Any character with the Legion Astartes (White Scars) special rule with access to power weapons as an option may instead take a power glaive for +25 points.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Power glaive	Melee	User/+1	3/2	Melee, Versatile

Versatile: A weapon with this type uses the first Str and AP values on its profile if wielded in one hand alongside another item of wargear, and the second Str and AP value if used as though it had the Two-handed special rule.

Cyber-hawk

This is represented by a small token or model, which is placed by the owning player at the beginning of their turn. The token can be placed anywhere on the table it may physically sit and may be moved elsewhere at the beginning of each of its owning player's turns. Any unit with the Infantry type and the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule that is firing upon an enemy unit which has at least one model within 6" of the token may re-roll failed To Hit rolls of 1. Any such unit assaulting such an enemy may re-roll the dice to determine charge range.

The counter representing the cyber-hawk plays no other role in the game, and may not be attacked or attack, or block line of sight, etc.

Any Legion Praetor model with the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule may take a single cyber-hawk for +10 points.

"Where the enemy gives you pause, do not give battle; once you give battle to the enemy, do not pause."

Attr. Jaghatai Khan at the Battle of Altan-ketheros

"Each new day we meet with bared blade and unbroken spirit is a victory for this Great Crusade. That the Vth Legion survives and fights on is a miracle unexpected by both friend and foe."

Attr. Captain Kornelius Dure of the 3rd Pioneer Company, V^th Legion of the Legiones Astartes, 832.M30

White Scars Unique Rite of War: Chogorian Brotherhood

Favoured by the Chogorian recruits to the Vth Legion as the ideal organisation of a fighting body of troops, the Brotherhood was also employed by many of the Legion's Terran warriors. Composed of a body of Legionaries mounted entirely on fleet warbikes and Scimitar jetbikes, or in other transport vehicles, these formations were ideal for harrying campaigns or lightning strike warfare. When faced with a dug-in foe, some elements of the Brotherhood would dismount to fight on foot, moving to encircle the enemy and support their brethren.

Effects

- **Ride like the Wind**: Skyhunter and Outrider squads count as Troops choices and scoring units.
- **Lightning Strike:** Built around a core of mounted Legionaries, the Brotherhoods of the White Scars used these troops as dedicated shock troops, while the slower elements of the Brotherhood encircled the enemy and took up positions to support the breaches opened up by their brethren. As a result, certain types of units gain additional special rules as noted below:
  - All models with the Bike or Jetbike type gain the Hit & Run special rule.
  - Any Infantry unit that does not begin play aboard a vehicle with the Transport type, or any vehicle with more than 3 Hull points that does not have the Fast type, must begin play in Reserve if the mission allows it.
  - Any Infantry unit in which there are no models equipped with Heavy, Salvo or Ordnance weapons gains the Hit & Run and Outflank special rules.
  - Any unit with the Infantry type that contains one or more models armed with a weapon with the Heavy, Salvo or Ordnance type gains the Outflank special rule.

Limitations

- The army's Warlord must be mounted on either a Space Marine Bike or Scimitar Jetbike.
- All compulsory Troops choices must be either Skyhunter or Outrider units.
- The army may not have more than one Heavy Support choice.
- If all Jetbikes or Bikes within the army are removed from the battlefield as casualties, the opposing player gains +D3 Victory points.

White Scars/Shattered Legions Unique Rite of War: The Sagyar Mazan

The people of Chogoris are possessed of great wisdom and capable of deep compassion, but these characteristics are tempered by a fierce and uncompromising sense of justice that can lead them to acts of apparent cruelty when discipline or honour is compromised. Within the White Scars Legion, outright disobedience or catastrophic failure is rewarded with death, delivered by the hand of a warrior's superior. Occasionally however, this punishment might be commuted to exile by a merciful leader sympathetic of mitigating circumstances. Those exiled from their Brotherhood are known as penitents, or the 'Sagyar Mazan', and it is their fate to seek out an honourable death and in so doing, wash away any stain of dishonour.

This Rite of War may only be taken by a Master of the Legion with the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule, and only then when he is leading an army assembled using the Shattered Legions Age of Darkness Theme presented on page 202 of *The Horus Heresy Book Six: Retribution*.

Effects

- **Death Seekers:** At the end of any game in which Victory points are used to determine the winner, roll a D6 for every unit with the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule in this detachment that has been destroyed and in so doing yielded Victory points to the opponent. On a roll of 4 or 5, no Victory points are awarded, while on a 6, no Victory points are awarded and the owning side earns 1 additional Victory point.
- **Serpent's Eye:** All models with the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule are Fearless for the first turn of any assault.

Limitations

- This Rite of War may only be used by a Loyalist army.
- The army may never contain more vehicles than it has units with the Infantry type.

The Golden Keshig

160 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Golden Keshig Rider	5	4	4	5	1	4	1	8	2+
Golden Keshig Champion	5	4	4	5	1	4	2	9	2+

Unit Composition
- 2 Golden Keshig Riders
- 1 Golden Keshig Champion

Unit Type
- Golden Keshig Rider: Jetbike
- Golden Keshig Champion: Jetbike (Character)

Wargear
- Artificer armour
- Chainsword or combat blade
- Bolt pistol
- Frag and krak grenades
- Kontos power lance
- White Scars Shamshir Jetbike with scatterbolt launcher

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (White Scars)
- Hit and Run

Options
- The Golden Keshig may take:
  - Up to 3 additional Golden Keshig Riders ..... +40 points each
- Any model in the squad may exchange their chainsword or combat weapon for a:
  - Power weapon ..... +10 points per model
- The entire squad may take melta bombs ..... +25 points
- The Golden Keshig Champion may exchange their chainsword or combat weapon for one of the following:
  - Thunder hammer ..... +20 points

Kontos Power Lance

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Kontos power lance	Melee	7/User[1]	2/4[1]	Melee, Two-handed, Sunder[2], Cumbersome, Murderous Strike[2], Concussive[2]

[1]*On any turn in which the bearer has charged, use the first value. On any other turn, use the second value.*

[2]*These special rules only apply on turns in which the bearer has charged.*

Cumbersome: A weapon with this type may only ever make a single attack in any given Assault phase. However, on a turn in which the bearer has charged, that attack is automatically made at Initiative step 10.

Scatterbolt Launcher

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Scatterbolt launcher	Template	5	4	Assault 1, Shred, Pinning

ELITES

Among the most prestigious of the White Scars main combat units are their heavy assault jetbike squads – often collectively referred to as the '*Golden Keshig*'. These superlatively skilled riders serve as linebreakers and assault units par excellence, often serving where other Legions would prefer to deploy heavy armour or massed Terminator units. Acting as the speartip of what the Legionaries of Chogoris called a Zao, a piercing attack at the heart of the enemy adapted from the horse-tribes of the Khan's home world, the Golden Keshig encircle the enemy at apparently random speeds and directions before focusing momentum into a single strike through the centre of an enemy formation.

Strikes such as these typically served to disrupt the front line of an enemy's advance and sow confusion throughout the ranks. The sheer terror caused by the Zao saw the Golden Keshig referred to on various worlds as the '*storm-ghost*' or the '*sky-beast tamers*', the latter particularly common on non-Compliant and less technologically advanced worlds during the Great Crusade. The manoeuvrability of the Golden Keshig afforded them the means to draw the foe into positions of weakness or force them towards open battlefields, in which no cover was available to save them from the furious onslaught of the White Scars Legion.

ELITES

The Kharash served as a ritual post of atonement and redemption for sins and breaches of honour within the White Scars, and a quick path to glory. Deployed in the van of sieges and other high-intensity conflicts, the Kharash served to shield the more fragile contingents of the White Scars, atoning for their perceived sins not only through the pursuit of martial glory, but through the protection of their brothers. Clad in black ceramite, the Ebon Keshig were instantly recognisable both as formidable warriors to the enemy, and to their brothers. Those who survived their service within the Ebon Keshig were deemed to have proven themselves worthy in the eyes of the Legion, often returning to either their previous posts or sometimes to other roles fitting their new mien.

Tactical Dreadnought Armour typically found little favour among the White Scars. Yet as with all conflicts, during the Great Crusade each Legion found themselves utilising everything they had at their disposal to fight in the name of, or against, the fledgling Imperium. Among the White Scars, the Kharash was one of the only units to utilise Tactical Dreadnought Armour, as the Ebon Keshig relied less upon speed and agility than they did on sheer strength and size.

The Ebon Keshig

225 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Kharash	4	4	4	4	1	4	2	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 5 Kharash

Unit Type
- Infantry

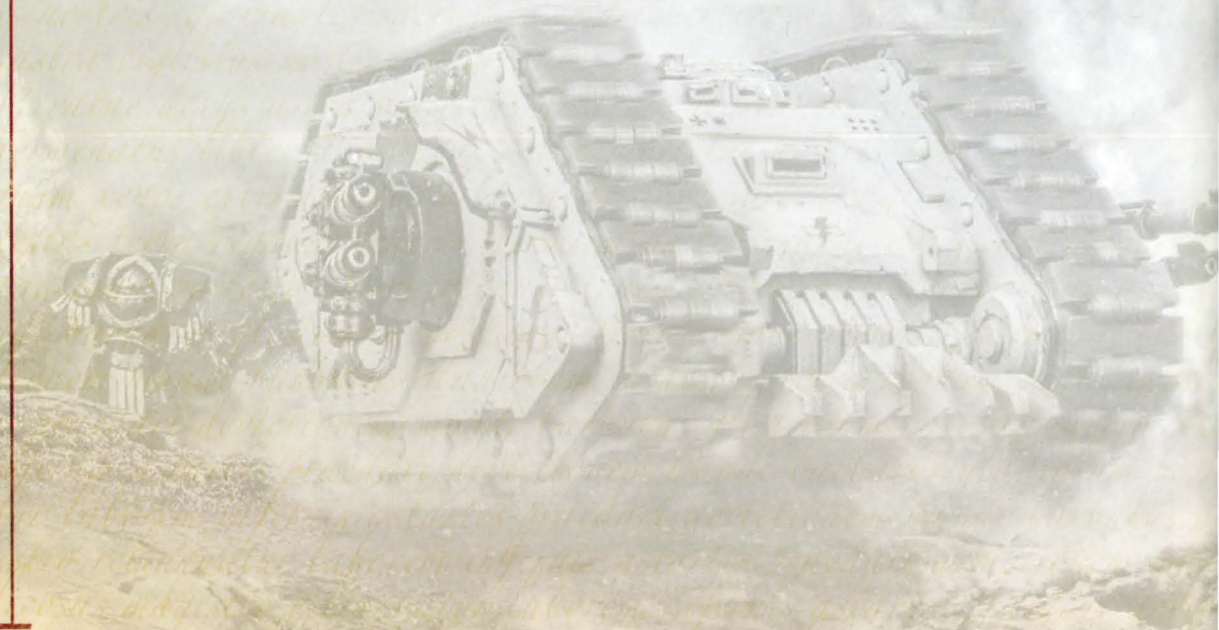
Wargear
- Terminator armour*
- Power glaive

**The unit may be equipped with Terminator armour, Tartaros Terminator armour or Cataphractii Terminator armour. The entire squad must use the same type, which must be represented on the models used.*

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (White Scars)
- Chosen Warriors
- Stubborn
- Feel No Pain (5+)
- The Kharash
- Support Unit

Options
- The Ebon Keshig may take:
  - Up to 5 additional Kharash ..... +45 points each
- Any model in the unit may exchange their power glaive for a:
  - Power weapon and combi-bolter ..... Free
- Any model in the unit may exchange their power glaive for a:
  - Power fist and combi-bolter ..... +10 points per model
- Any model in the unit may take a grenade harness ..... +10 points
- Any model may exchange their combi-bolter for a:
  - Combi-weapon ..... +15 points per model

The Kharash: A unit with this special rule never counts as a scoring unit, however the enemy player may never score any Victory points for the destruction of a unit with this special rule regardless of the scenario played or any victory conditions in effect. In addition, a unit with this special rule may not be joined by any model that does not also have the Kharash special rule.



The Falcon's Claws

90 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Falcon's Claw	4	4	4	4	1	4	1	8	4+
Falcon's Claw Champion	4	4	4	4	1	4	2	9	4+

Unit Composition
- 4 Falcon's Claws
- 1 Falcon's Claw Champion

Unit Type
- Falcon's Claw: Infantry
- Falcon's Claw Champion: Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Recon armour
- Pair of lightning claws
- Frag and krak grenades
- Shroud bombs
- Cameleoline

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (White Scars)
- Outriders
- Move Through Cover
- Precision Strikes
- Hatred (Characters)

Options
- The Falcon's Claws may take:
  - Up to 5 additional Falcon's Claws ..... +16 points each
- Any model in the unit may exchange their pair of lightning claws for a:
  - Power weapon and bolt pistol ..... Free
- The entire squad may take melta bombs ..... +20 points
- The Falcon's Claw Champion may take a cyber-hawk ..... +10 points
- The Falcon's Claw Champion may exchange one of their lightning claws for one of the following:
  - Thunder hammer ..... +20 points
  - Power fist ..... +15 points
  - Hand flamer ..... +5 points
  - Plasma pistol ..... +10 points
  - Volkite serpenta ..... +2 points

Outriders: A model with this special rule is treated as having the Scout special rule, but may redeploy up to 18" regardless of its unit type. It must still remain at least 12" away from any enemy unit.

Fast Attack

Ranging far ahead of the main White Scars advance, the Falcon's Claws serve as long-range scouts, assassins and harriers. Before battle is joined, they will attempt to mark key points of assault, destroy supply routes and eliminate key commanders – after the battle, they pursue and slaughter the retreating foe. Often taken from the recruits that have chosen the Noble Pursuit of the hunt, and in particular those who showed an exceptional aptitude for tracking and hunting, the Falcon's Claws excel at reading the battlefield and determining from where the enemy is likely to launch their attack, or in which direction they are likely to be mounting their defence.

The Falcon's Claws are highly skilled not only as scouts, but as ambushers capable of laying deadly traps for the foe. Able to predict the foe's movements with remarkable accuracy using a planet's topography, they are able to feed back to the Legion's commanders as to the enemy's plan of attack, and as such co-ordinate the laying of ambushes to decapitate the enemy formation before it gains momentum. Through harrying an enemy's advance from their back line, the Falcon's Claws effectively herd the foe into a battlefield more advantageous to other White Scars forces, ensuring victory against those who would see the noble followers of the Khan laid low.

White Scars Kyzagan Assault Speeder — 105 points

	Armour			
	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Kyzagan Assault Speeder	4	12	11	10	2

Unit Composition
- 1 Kyzagan Assault Speeder

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Skimmer, Fast)

Wargear
- Kheres pattern assault cannon
- Two reaper autocannon

Special Rules
- Deep Strike
- Outflank
- Strafing Run
- Grav Backwash

Options
- The Kyzagan squadron may include:
  - Up to two additional Kyzagan Assault speeders ..... +105 points per model
- Any Kyzagan may be equipped with any of the following upgrades:
  - Searchlight ..... +1 point
  - Up to two hunter-killer missiles ..... +5 points each

Grav Backwash: Unless the Kyzagan has become immobilised, attackers suffer -2 To Hit in close combat.

Fast Attack

With few heavy tanks capable of keeping pace with the more fleet Brotherhood's bike-mounted warriors, the White Scars turned to the Javelin platform to provide them with a mobile and yet hard-hitting support vehicle. Mounted with a Kheres assault cannon and two Reaper autocannon, the Kyzagan Assault Speeder serves as a highly agile heavy weapons platform that is capable of tearing through both armoured vehicles and infantry with ease, while able to provide support to the rest of the Legion's swift-moving Jetbike squadrons.

Such agile vehicles were in high demand among the White Scars, as they added an impressive weight of firepower to the Legion's Zao and scouting missions. The Kyzagan proved during the Great Crusade and beyond to be a highly versatile vehicle on the battlefield, given its lack of reliance on conventional tracks as with the Legiones Astartes' heavy armour, allowing it to engage in almost every conflict the White Scars pursued.

Qin Xa

Master of the Keshig, Chosen of the Khagan

220 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Qin Xa	6	4	4	4	4	6	5	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Tartaros Terminator armour
- Iron halo
- Grenade harness
- The Tails of the Dragon

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (White Scars)
- Independent Character
- Master of the Legion
- Counter-attack
- Furious Charge
- Master of the Keshig
- Warlord (If Qin Xa is your army's Warlord, he has the Chosen of the Khagan trait rather than rolling randomly)

This unit may only be taken as part of a Loyalist Faction army.

Master of the Keshig

Qin Xa was one of the Great Khan's most trusted advisors and, as such, commanded the venerated Keshig in battle. His sworn duty to protect his Primarch saw him lead the Keshig through many hunts, earning ever greater glory in the name of the Khagan.

Any army that includes Qin Xa may select a Legion Command Squad with the Terminator Bodyguard upgrade to represent the Keshig – this unit does not use up a HQ slot. Any model in the unit chosen to represent the Keshig may replace their power weapon with a power glaive for +10 points. If this option is used, the unit representing the Keshig must be deployed with Qin Xa as part of the unit during deployment at the start of the game.

The Tails of the Dragon

As the legend is told amongst the horse tribes of Chogoris, the Tails of the Dragon were twin blades gifted by the Khan to one among their tribe loyal without question not only to them, but to the protection of the tribe and to the pursuit of ever greater martial glory. While the original blades, if they ever existed, have been lost to time, the Tails of the Dragon blades gifted to Qin Xa by the Khagan were crafted in their image and legacy in a form more befitting a renowned warrior of the White Scars Legion.

The Tails of the Dragon are two separate Dao blades used together as a matched pair, and the bonus for wielding two melee weapons has already been included in Qin Xa's profile. As a master of the many forms associated with the use of these exotic weapons, Qin Xa may employ different modes of attack. When attacking with the Tails of the Dragon in close combat, select one of the profiles to use from those shown below at the start of each of the controlling player's Assault phases, before any attacks are made:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Tails of the Dragon				
- Split the Mountain	-	+3	2	Melee, Unwieldy, Master-crafted
- Part the Horse's Mane	-	+1	2	Melee, Precision Strikes, Master-crafted

Warlord: Chosen of the Khagan

If Qin Xa is the army's Warlord, once per game the controlling player may choose to either bring a single eligible friendly unit into play from Reserve automatically instead of rolling or have it remain in Reserve for that turn.

HQ

An exceptional warrior even before he became a White Scar, Qin Xa fought alongside Jaghatai Khan during their youth on Chogoris. Qin Xa was frequently described by his Primarch as one of the most formidable warriors of the Legion, having mastered the art of the hunt at a young age and bringing such skills to bear by the Primarch's side during the Great Crusade and the Horus Heresy that was to follow. Though few outside of the Legion have spoken of Qin Xa's prowess, it is often described within the records of the Legion that he took to the battlefield as a force of nature, with a fury and strength behind his aggression that, while apparently barbaric, was tempered by a keen intelligence and an innate sense for the ebb and flow of battle.

Though loyal to his master, Qin Xa was known to question the decisions of the Khagan on occasion and actively encourage those within the Keshig to question him too, to ensure that they never became followers blind in faith. Though Terminator armour was often eschewed within the White Scars, cumbersome as it was, he was one of the few who actively preferred its bulk. Despite the weight of this armour, his skill as a deft warrior was not dulled in any way, wielding the Tails of the Dragon with consummate skill.

HQ

Tsolmon Khan did not fit the mould from which many of the Great Khan's Chogorian sons were cast, towering over most of his brothers and with an imposing bulk more suited to one of Ferrus Manus' dour sons. Despite this, he was one of the most devoted adherents to Jaghatai Khan's reforms of the Vth Legion, fluent in both Khorchin and Terran gothic, and possessing a dry wit and flair for the solemn poetry favoured by the Khagan. His quiet courage and resolute loyalty were considered as much an asset as the sheer strength with which he wielded his hammer, for he showed little mercy to those who dared to take up arms against his Legion and the Primarch he swore to follow.

First serving under another name as part of the 532nd Pioneer Company, Tsolmon was one of only 24 of his comrades who survived to reach Chogoris and witness the Great Khan re-unite the Vth Legion. Within the span of half a century, he had risen to the rank of Khan, and by the time of the Chondax Crusade, was one of the more respected Khans serving as part of Asudai Noyan-khan's Horde. The fierce loyalty he engendered from his warriors earned him allies both within and without the Legion and, unusually among the often reclusive White Scars, was well known to warriors of a number of Legions and other Imperial institutions.

Tsolmon Khan

180 points

Khan of the Brotherhood of the Golden Star, Champion of Byfrust, The Hammerhand

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Tsolmon Khan	6	5	5	4	3	5	4	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

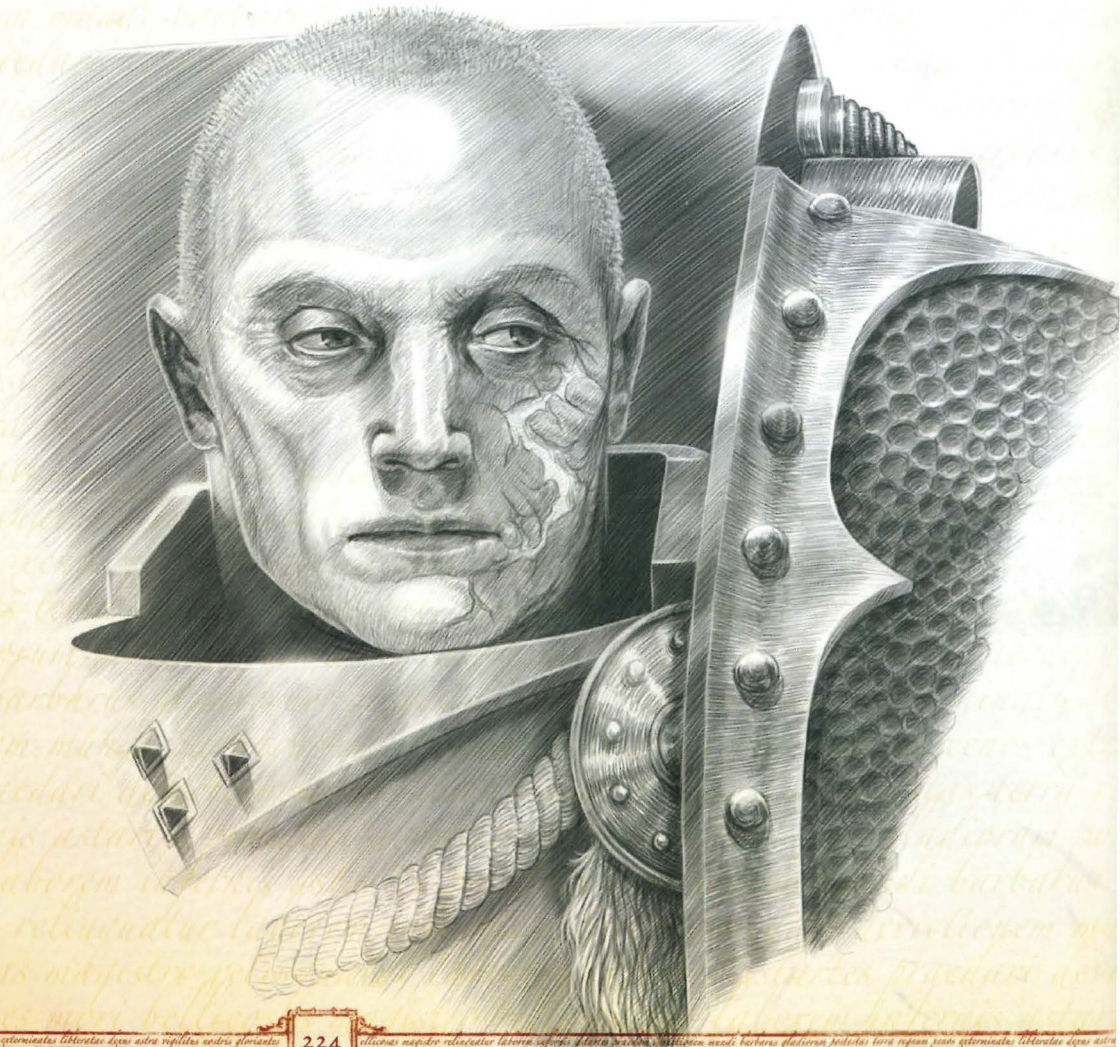
Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Artificer armour
- Master-crafted thunder hammer
- Combi-melta
- Bolt pistol
- Iron halo
- Frag & krak grenades

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes (White Scars)
- Independent Character
- Master of the Legion
- The Hammerhand
- Ally of the Silent Order
- Warlord: Inspiring Presence

Options
- Tsolmon Khan may be mounted on a:
  - Scimitar jetbike with heavy bolter .....+30 points
  (If this option is selected then his Toughness characteristic is increased to 5).
- If not mounted on a Scimitar Jetbike, then this unit may also include a:
  - Single Sister of Silence Oblivion Knight-Centura.....+75 points
  (See the Talons of the Emperor army list for additional options and costs – this Oblivion Knight-Centura cannot be selected as the army's Warlord.)

This unit may only be taken as part of a Loyalist Faction army.



The Hammerhand
On any turn in which Tsolmon Khan has successfully charged an enemy unit, the controlling player may choose to, instead of making his normal allotment of close combat attacks, instead make a single attack using Tsolmon Khan's master-crafted thunder hammer at his normal Initiative, ignoring the Unwieldy special rule.

Ally of the Silent Order
In the wake of the campaign at Chondax, Tsolmon Khan carried a number of relics once belonging to Knight-Centura Calistis Merovin away from the lonely moon of Byfrust. These he bore to the Sisters of Silence along with testimony of their sister's bravery in battle and honours from the Great Khan himself. Given to secrecy and isolation, the Sisters of Silence expect little thanks from the other military arms of the Imperium and such an act of noble contrition impressed the matriarchs of the Order greatly. In return for the honours done to their fallen sister, and in furtherance of the bond forged by the humble Khan of the Golden Star, they undertook to provide a guard of honour to stand beside him in battle, an honour extended to very few in the history of the Imperium and one that Tsolmon Khan treated with the utmost respect.

A single Sister of Silence Oblivion Knight-Centura may be selected as part of Tsolmon Khan's unit as long as he is not mounted on a Scimitar Jetbike, at the start of the game during deployment – these two models must remain part of the same unit. After having been deployed onto the battlefield, they may in subsequent turns operate as separate Independent Characters.

In addition, Tsolmon Khan does not reduce his Leadership value due to proximity to models with the Psychic Anathema special rule, and if he uses the Glorious Intervention special rule to intercede in a Challenge involving a friendly Sisters of Silence character, then he gains an additional attack for the duration of that Challenge. If this is used in the same turn as The Hammerhand special rule, then the +1 Attack bonus may be used to increase the number of Attacks made from 1 to 2.

Warlord: Inspiring Presence
Rather than rolling to determine his Warlord Trait at the start of the game, if Tsolmon Khan is the army's Warlord then he always gains the Inspiring Presence Warlord Trait from the *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook* instead.

Jaghatai Khan

395 points (The Khan Afoot)

Khagan of the White Scars, The Warhawk, Master of the Ice-blue Heavens, Primarch of the White Scars

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
The Khan Afoot	7	6	6	6	6	8	6	10	2+
The Khan Mounted	7	6	6	7	6	7	6	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type (The Khan Afoot)
- Infantry (Character)

Unit Type (The Khan Mounted)
- Jetbike (Character)

Wargear (The Khan Afoot)
- The Wildfire Panoply
- The White Tiger Dao
- Archaeotech pistol
- Frag grenades

Wargear (The Khan Mounted)
- The Wildfire Panoply
- The White Tiger Dao
- Archaeotech pistol
- Frag grenades
- Sojutsu pattern voidbike

Special Rules (The Khan Afoot)
- Primarch (Independent Character, Eternal Warrior, Fear, Adamantium Will, Fleet, Fearless, It Will Not Die, Master of the Legion, Precision Strike, Precision Shot)
- Sire of the White Scars
- Crusader
- The Bleak Wind
- Lightning from Blue Skies
- Bulky

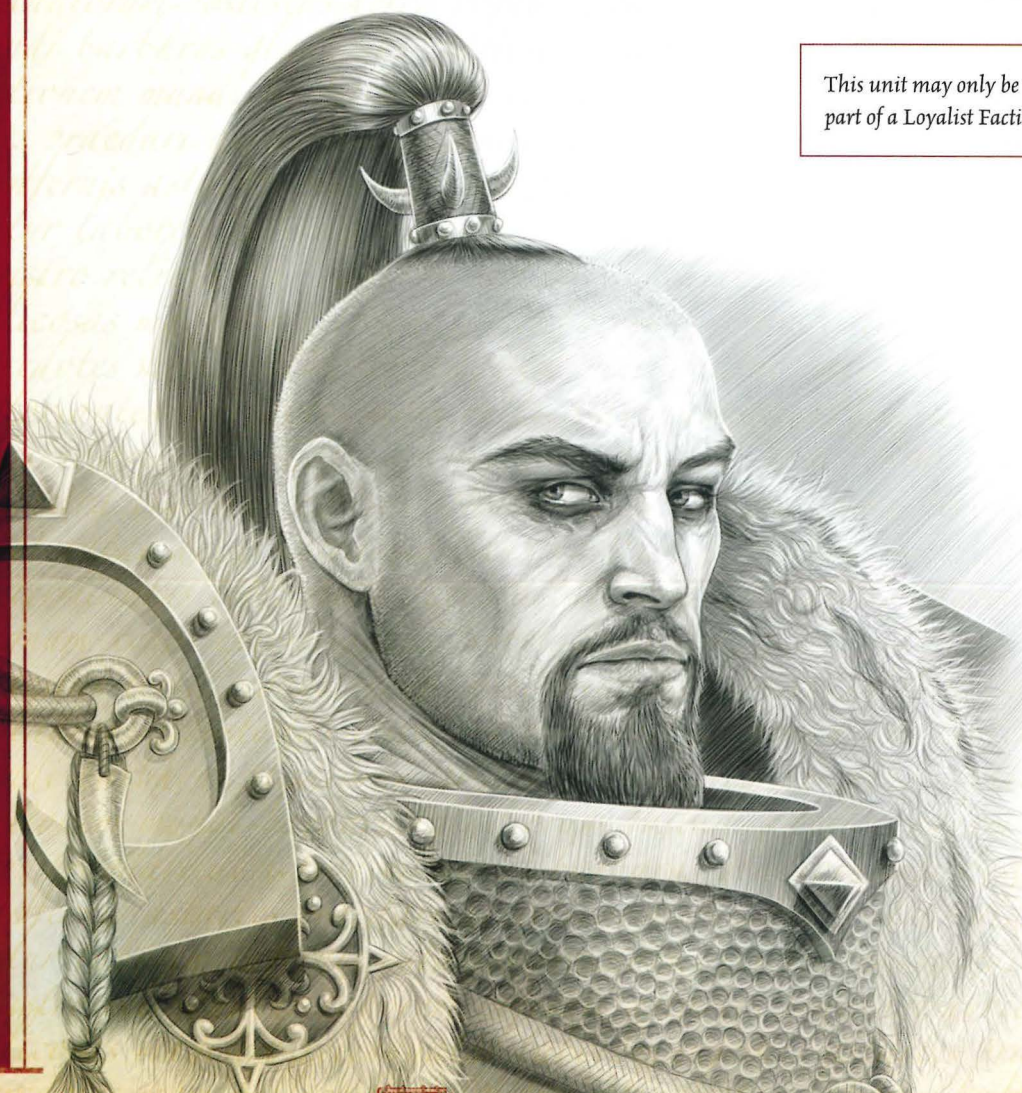
Special Rules (The Khan Mounted)
- Primarch (Independent Character, Eternal War, Fear, Adamantium Will, Fleet, Fearless, It Will Not Die, Master of the Legion, Precision Strike, Precision Shot)
- Sire of the White Scars
- Unmatched Rider
- The Bleak Wind
- Lightning from Blue Skies
- Extremely Bulky

Options
- The Khan Afoot may be replaced with:
  - The Khan Mounted.....+65 points

This unit may only be taken as part of a Loyalist Faction army.

Jaghatai Khan was the unexpected storm, a sudden and devastating gale that came and went as it pleased. Of all his brothers he had found the Great Crusade most to his liking, an endless hunt in the dark places of the galaxy. As the Great Crusade raged across the galaxy, he had sat at its heart, always fighting and always on the move, laughing as he killed. Yet the Great Khan was no simple berserker, for in even the simplest task he sought perfection through discipline. His was the quiet competence of a master, seeking no acclaim from others, but only the satisfaction to be found in a perfect stroke of the sword or a well-placed word.

Among the Emperor's Primarchs, the Khan was among the most reclusive, bound to the hunt and the glory of the chase rather than parade ground or strategium halls, and was oft overlooked by the eyes of history. He managed no great empire, nor wrote any great treatise of war, yet his actions guided the course of the Great Crusade with the quiet skill that was the hallmark of his Legion. Thus, when Horus brought civil war to the fledgling Imperium, few looked to the Khan, his loyalty presumed by those who thought themselves his better and demanded by those he once counted as friends. When the Khan at last made his choice, when the forgotten Legion chose for itself a path to walk, it would shake the very pillars of heaven.



Sire of the White Scars
In the first turn of any combat, Jaghatai Khan always strikes first, before any other models, but after Hammer of Wrath. If any other model also automatically strikes first, then use the two models' Initiative values to decide which of them will strike first should the two meet in combat. When Jaghatai Khan is included as part of an army, all friendly models with the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule that are also part of the army gain the Scout special rule.

The Bleak Wind
Jaghatai Khan and any unit with the Legiones Astartes (White Scars) special rule that he joins gains the Hit and Run special rule.

Lightning from Blue Skies
When held in reserve, do not roll for Jaghatai Khan or any unit he is considered to be part of while in reserve. Instead, the controlling player should note down the turn on which Jaghatai Khan and any unit he has joined will arrive on the table before the battle begins (this may not be the first turn, but may be any other turn. He cannot elect to stay in reserve). Similarly, when the Khan arrives on the table by means of the Outflank special rule, do not roll for the table edge that he arrives on. Instead, the controlling player should note down before the battle begins which table edge the Khan and any accompanying unit will arrive from.

The White Tiger Dao

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
White Tiger Dao	Melee	+1/user*	2	Melee, Duellist's Edge, Master-crafted

**On any turn in which Jaghatai Khan charges, use the first value. On any other turn, use the second.*

The Wildfire Panoply
Fashioned to be as aesthetically pleasing as it was impregnable, the Khagan's armour perfectly complemented his fast and uncompromising style of warfare, and bore a number of unique systems to improve his already unmatched reflexes. The Wildfire Panoply provides a 2+ armour save and a 5+ invulnerable save during the Shooting phase and a 3+ invulnerable save during the Assault Phase, including when targeted by Overwatch attacks. In addition, it grants the Khan the Move Through Cover special rule.

Sojutsu Pattern Voidbike
The Sojutsu pattern voidbike is an early prototype jetbike that predates the more common Scimitar jetbike in use with the Legiones Astartes. During initial trials its thrusters were capable of providing sufficient thrust to grant the bike limited periods of true flight, and even some manoeuvrability in deep space, and it was classed by the Logisticae Imperialis as an ultralight fighter craft instead of a jetbike.

Jaghatai Khan retains a specially engineered version of this prototype vehicle for his own use, its enhanced thrusters capable of carrying the Primarch into battle with a swiftness equal to the lesser mounts used by the other warriors of his Legion. It increases his Toughness by +1, which is already incorporated into his mounted profile, and changes his unit type to Jetbike (Character). The Jetbike is armed with two master-crafted heavy bolters, and when the Khan Mounted makes a Hammer of Wrath attack, he inflicts D3 hits instead of one.

Unmatched Rider
Jaghatai Khan automatically passes Dangerous Terrain tests, and when Jinking receives a 3+ Jink cover save (other cover saves are unaffected).

Daemons of the Ruinstorm Army List

"Our sin was to reach too far, too quickly. We played at being gods and in our fumbling awoke an older, darker, power."

Theokrand Blanth, Theoretician of the Imperial Court

Daemons of the Ruinstorm Army List

With the ending of the great empyreal storms that had sealed Terra away from the rest of the galaxy for generations, there had been an extended calm amid the vast unseen oceans of the Warp. An invisible tide had rolled back across reality, the powers of those ephemeral creatures known to some as Daemons waning and failing in the face of this change. It was a signal for which the Emperor had long awaited, the sign that would precede His Great Crusade and the taming of a wild galaxy, an attempt to suppress once and for all the dark between the stars that threatened the future of Mankind. By the power of His armies, both of warriors armed with blade and bolter and those armed with stylus and picter unit, the Emperor sought to erase all trace of the Daemon and its power, to bury the legends and fears of Old Night beneath the burdensome weight of His Truth.

It would not last. Horus and his allies let slip all of the guards and locks placed on the Warp and its powers, giving new strength to the creatures that lay waiting in that ephemeral realm. By means of the great ritual performed on Calth, and the many bloody sacrifices made on the altar of war, they broke the Emperor's fragile grip on the Warp and its cruel masters. The Ruinstorm was loosed upon a galaxy utterly unready for its fury and Daemons ran wild on uncounted worlds, each left alone amid the storm of war to die forgotten and unnoticed, playthings for a malignance that took a perverse pleasure in the suffering it caused. Indeed, the madness of the war that engulfed the Imperium seemed only to feed the Daemonic forces that appeared across the galaxy, sending them into frenzies of violence and destruction.

In Forms Uncounted and Foul

These creatures were a new and unknown curse upon the galaxy, no codex or archive held any mention of them, for the Emperor had seen to their destruction or concealment. None were ready for them – it was a force that paid no heed to military logic or any sane pattern of war, a force whose weapons obeyed no law of known physics, a force whose only desire was for death and destruction. Though they swept across the galaxy like a tide of ruin, such was the foul variety of their forms that none saw in them a single unified force, but rather a swarm of disparate warbands. Many assumed them to be some new xenos menace, and even those who saw some fragment of the truth could hardly guess at the true scale of their peril.

There are many reports from that dark era, each detailing an incursion by the creatures we now know as Daemons, and each spoke of creatures so vastly different that it seems almost impossible that they might be aligned. Some were bestial and foul, bronze-furred beasts of war, while others stood tall and beautiful upon the blood-soaked fields of battle. Few accounts agreed on anything save the sheer vicious savagery of their attackers, and those who ventured forth found nothing but ruins in their wake. This was a new foe that refused to hold ground, sought no advantage from war save its red bounty of death and left no clue as to their final goal. Those who sought to plan tactics to deal with such a foe found little help in the reports of their soldiers and less from the records of the Great Crusade, for these creatures laughed in the face of conventional wisdom.

A Daemon Army List for Battles in the Age of Darkness

This section details the Daemons of the Ruinstorm for use as an army list in your The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness games. Future Forge World products and releases will add to and combine with the rules and units presented here.

Using the Daemons of the Ruinstorm Army List

The Daemons of the Ruinstorm army list is a supplementary army list presenting a new Faction for The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness rules, representing the Daemonic incursions that were loosed upon the Imperium by the chaos of war and the sorcery of those that fought in it, and may be used as the Primary or Allied Detachment of an army. The unit rules, profiles and army list presented here serve as the basis for the army list and will be expanded upon in future books in Forge World's Horus Heresy range. In terms of Faction and Allegiance levels, the Daemons of the Ruinstorm army list must always be used to represent a force of the Traitor Allegiance, and are treated as Agents of the Warmaster for purposes of the Allies chart.

"Once you burned our churches, our places of power and called us fools. Now the wheel has turned. You have unleashed that which we sought to appease and you bring me up from the darkness of your prison in search of weapons. I will not aid you, for I know the foe you face and the hell they will bring to you brings me only joy."

Attr. Kamren Athern, convicted theocrat shortly before his execution in 009.M31

Designer's Note: The Perils of Infinite Variety

The Daemons of the Ruinstorm army list which is presented over the following pages contains all of the rules and profiles required in order to field it in any game played using The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness rules. However, it remains an unusual and exotic force when compared to the regimented ranks of the Legiones Astartes and other Imperium armies. In play, it operates in a manner quite different from most armies in order to reflect the unique and inhuman needs of the creatures that fill its ranks, and it ≠will pose a unique challenge that we hope will inspire players to field new and interesting armies and formations to both fight against this threat and to take advantage of the opportunities it presents.

Furthermore, the Daemons of the Ruinstorm army list has been devised with the intent of allowing players to make use of Games Workshop's wide ranges of Daemonic and bestial models in order to build a unique army. This can lead to a number of interesting conversions and other modelling projects, which is part and parcel of the fun of building such an army, but can be confusing to opponents unfamiliar with it.

As such, all Daemons of the Ruinstorm units should clearly display any options selected on each model in that unit, and players should avoid using the same models to represent differently equipped units from game to game. In the interests of fair play, and the enjoyment of all involved, take a moment to be certain that your opponent knows what each of your units is and which options you have taken.

Daemons and Bases

The units and characters listed as part of this army list should be represented by models chosen from Games Workshop's large range of Daemons and monstrous creatures. Given the wide range of choices available to represent these units, as well as the wealth of conversion opportunities, players should use the list presented here as a guide for basing models appropriately or to decide if a given Games Workshop model or unit is appropriate to represent the unit in question. As such, when building conversions or utilising different models to represent units from this army list, the base sizes of the various models should be kept to the guidelines listed here:

- **Ruinstorm Daemon Lord** ..... 130 mm base
- **Ruinstorm Greater Daemon** ..... 130 mm base
- **Ruinstorm Daemon Chosen** ..... 32 mm base
- **Ruinstorm Daemon Brute** ..... 50 mm base
- **Ruinstorm Lesser Daemons** ..... 32 mm base
- **Ruinstorm Daemon Beasts** ..... 40 mm base
- **Ruinstorm Daemon Swarms** ..... 40 mm base
- **Ruinstorm Possessed** ..... 32 mm base (Legionary)
  ..... 25 mm base (Auxiliary)
- **Ruinstorm Daemon Cavalry** ..... 70 mm x 25 mm oval bases
- **Ruinstorm Daemon Shrikes** ..... 60 mm base
- **Ruinstorm Greater Daemon Beasts** ..... 100 mm base
- **Ruinstorm Daemon Behemoth** ..... 170 mm x 105 mm oval base

"Woe betide any who make compacts with the foulest forces of the Warp – for the chance of a moment's triumph, they sell their soul hereafter unto an eternity of torment."

Vilem Hephaestus, Historical Arcanist

The following special rules are used by models in the Daemons of the Ruinstorm army list as noted on their profiles:

Daemon of the Ruinstorm

Brought forth by the waxing power of the Ruinstorm and the dark magicks of Horus' allies, the Daemons of the Ruinstorm were a far different breed than that called out by simple rituals of summoning. Their power was their own, the naked might of the Warp set loose by its own will and desire without the constraint of mortal laws.

Models with this special rule have a 5+ invulnerable save and gain the Fear special rule. In addition, they are immune to the effects of the Fear special rule themselves and automatically pass Pinning, Fear and Regroup tests, and cannot choose to fail a Morale check due to the Our Weapons are Useless rule. When a Morale check taken by a unit with this special rule is failed, they do not Fall Back as per the standard rules, but instead suffer Perils of the Warp.

Any effect or rule that targets models with the Daemon special rule also targets and affects models with this special rule as though they had the Daemon rule.

All models with this special rule that suffer Perils of the Warp for any reason use the table below instead of the one supplied as part of the core rules. (Note that some effects only occur during the Psychic phase – when rolling on this table in other phases, ignore all references to Warp Charges. Wounds inflicted by rolls on this table are allocated by the controlling player).

Ruinstorm Perils of the Warp Table

D6	Result
1	**Cross-tide Flux:** The model/unit must reduce its WS, BS and I to 1 until the end of the controlling player's next turn and the unit/model suffers D3 automatic wounds with no saves of any kind allowed, including Feel No Pain rolls. In addition, if this result occurs during the Psychic phase then that phase ends immediately and all remaining Warp Charges are discarded.
2-5	**The Tides Becalmed:** The unit/model suffers D3 automatic wounds with no saves of any kind allowed, including Feel No Pain rolls. In addition, if this result occurs during the Psychic phase then roll D3+1. Both players gain a number of Warp Charges equal to the result.
6	**Warp Bloom:** The model/unit increases its WS, BS and I by +1 until the end of the controlling player's next turn. In addition, if this result occurs during the Psychic phase then roll a D3. The Daemons of the Ruinstorm player gains a number of Warp Charges equal to the result.

Parting the Veil (Realspace Tear)

Rarely does a Daemon host exist long enough to march into battle; more often they simply appear, rending apart the veil between this world and the next before falling upon those unfortunates in their path. For merely mortal armies such an assault left little real means of defence, for no wall nor fortress could keep the hordes of the Warp at bay.

A Daemonic horde cares nothing for deployment zones or military logic. All units in the army with this special rule begin play in Reserve, and no model with this special rule can be deployed before turn one. At the beginning of the game, after Deployment but before any Infiltrators are deployed or rolls to Seize the Initiative have been made, the Daemon player must deploy a number of Warp Rift markers as follows:

- Each marker must be deployed at least 6" away from any table edge, and 12" away from any enemy unit and any other Warp Rift marker or objective.
- No Warp Rift marker may be placed within difficult terrain, impassable terrain or dangerous terrain or inside a Building or Fortification.
- Once deployed, no enemy unit may be placed within 12" of one of these templates during the deployment of Infiltrators or other units that deploy outside of the normal order.

Warp Rift Markers

A Warp Rift marker should be represented by a 5" diameter circular template, exactly the same as those used to represent Large Blasts. While a spare Large Blast (5") marker will serve admirably in this role, players may wish to model a solid hemisphere to more accurately show the space filled by the portal – even better if this is then painted in a pattern of swirling Warp energy!

If the Daemons of the Ruinstorm Detachment is your Primary Detachment, then three Warp Rift markers are deployed. If the Daemons of the Ruinstorm Detachment forms an Allied Detachment or other secondary Detachment then only a single Warp Rift marker is deployed. Should two Daemons of the Ruinstorm armies meet in battle, then each player may only use those Warp Rift markers they have placed to indicate where they will deploy models from their own army, while their opponent must use those that they have placed. Each side should mark their Warp Rifts so they can be quickly and easily distinguished.

These markers are treated as impassable terrain by both sides, and the edges of the markers count as the table edge for the Daemons player that placed them for purposes of Falling Back or any other rule requiring them to move towards their own table edge. Any shooting attacks that draw line of sight through a Warp Rift marker count as having drawn line of sight through another unit and grant a cover save to the target as per the Intervening Models rule. Any models with the Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule that are within 6" of a Warp Rift marker may re-roll failed invulnerable saves.

During the controlling player's first turn, a Reserves roll (see page 147 of *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*) of 3+ is made for all models in Reserve with the Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule. Any models that pass this test may move onto the table from any point on the edge of one of the Warp Rift markers placed by the controlling player. Daemons of the Ruinstorm units entering play from Ongoing Reserves enter play in the same fashion. Units that have moved into play using this method may Run or Shoot without restriction (but count as having moved) but may not declare a charge on the same turn. If at any point in the game a Daemon of the Ruinstorm unit cannot enter play through a Warp Rift due to other models occupying the space, then it must remain in Reserve and cannot enter play by any other method.

Rules that place modifiers of any kind on Reserves rolls made to see which Daemons of the Ruinstorm units enter play have no effect on models entering play via a Warp Rift marker. The vagaries of the Warp pay no heed to the tactics or technology of Mankind.

Tides of Madness (Transient Phenomenon)

A Daemonic incursion cannot long exist in the physical realm without a huge expenditure of energy, or the existence of aberrant physical conditions previously thought impossible by Imperium science. As such, the longer an incursion lasts, the less powerful it becomes and the easier to obliterate it is.

All models with this special rule are directly affected by the shifting tides of the Warp, and have their base statistics modified based on the current game turn as shown on the table below:

Turn	Toughness	Strength
1-2	+1	+1
3-4	-	-
5-6	-1	-1
7+	-2	-2

"The innervation of the Daemon is the truest power one can wield – I relish the day I will ascend to become more than a man, to become a beast of the cosmos"

Dominicus the Mad, condemned demagogue and agitator

Emanations of Horror (Aberrant Taxonomy)

Infinite in their foul and endless variety, Daemons cannot be placed into neat brackets like mortal troops, for even amongst those of similar clades there were few similarities. Each and every one held some unique curse or bizarre mutation, each a new weapon to be plied in battle against mortal man.

Any unit with the option to select one or more Emanations of Horror may select options from this list. These are intended to represent the vast panoply of mutations and manifestations of Chaos evidenced by the minions of the Warp, and as such the descriptions given are not intended to enforce the actual appearance of these features but are rather intended as inspiration. Crushing Claws might represent a Daemonic blade that slices through armour or a set of barbs that tears at the foe as easily as do armour-crunching claws. However, no matter what models or conversions are used to represent options from this list, a Daemons of the Ruinstorm player should always make it obvious to their opponent which options are represented by what among their collection.

Emanations marked with an * are only available to units in Detachments with a specific Aetheric Dominion. Refer to the Aetheric Dominions section that follows for more details on which forces may make use of these Emanations. Note that if an Independent Character joins a unit then it does not gain the benefit of Emanations possessed by the unit unless that model also possesses the same Emanation, likewise Emanations possessed by the Independent Character are not passed on to the unit unless the unit already possesses that Emanation. In cases where both the character and unit possess the same Emanation and its effects are based on the total number of models in the unit then the character is included in that total while it is part of the unit. For example, if a unit of five models with the Flaming Ichor Emanation is joined by an Independent Character with the same Emanation, then it is considered a unit of six and may make two attacks with that Emanation in the Shooting phase. If that same unit was joined by an Independent Character that did not possess the Flaming Ichor Emanation, then it would only make a single attack in the Shooting phase.

The points costs paid for any given Emanation of Horror are ordered into several brackets in each option, with more powerful Daemons paying more for certain Emanations. Note that a cost of '-' means that units from that bracket may not select that Emanation. The unit types in each bracket are shown below. Please bear in mind that every model in a unit of Daemons of the Ruinstorm must have the same Emanations of Horror, and so if an Emanation is bought for one model in a unit, it must be bought for all of them. However, separate units of the same type may have different arrays of Emanations:

Bracket One: Ruinstorm Daemon Brutes, Ruinstorm Lesser Daemons, Ruinstorm Beasts, Ruinstorm Swarms, Ruinstorm Cavalry

Bracket Two: Ruinstorm Daemon Lords, Ruinstorm Greater Daemons, Ruinstorm Daemon Shrike, Ruinstorm Daemon Chosen

Bracket Three: Greater Ruinstorm Daemon Beast, Ruinstorm Daemon Behemoth

For example: *If a player wishes to add Crushing Claws to a unit of Lesser Daemons then the cost is listed as 5/15/10. As the Lesser Daemons fit in Bracket One, the cost to pay is 5 points per model.*

Emanations of Horror

Lord of Sorcery (-/25/- points): This unit gains the Psyker special rule and a single level of Psychic Mastery. Additional levels of Mastery may be purchased at a cost of 25 points per additional level. Only Daemon Lords, Chosen and Greater Daemons may purchase this Emanation and only Daemon Lords may purchase more than two levels of Mastery. Psychic powers may be selected from any of the disciplines presented in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook* except Malefic or Sanctic Daemonology.

Daemonic Wings (5/25/- points per model in the unit): The unit's type is changed from Infantry to Jump Pack Infantry or Jump Pack Monstrous Creature.

Crushing Claws (5/15/10 points per model in the unit): The unit gains the Rending special rule on all close combat attacks it makes.

Flensing Talons (3/10/5 points per model in the unit): The unit gains the Shred special rule on all close combat attacks it makes.

Sundering Fangs (5/15/5 points per model in the unit): Any model in the unit may choose to make a single attack during the Fight phase, in Initiative step 1, instead of their standard number of attacks. This single attack is made at twice the normal Strength of that model (to a maximum of 10) and gains the Sunder special rule.

Miasma of Rot* (3/10/15 points per model in the unit): Any enemy unit locked in combat with a unit with this Emanation reduces its Toughness by -1, or, if it has an Armour Value instead of a Toughness characteristic, reduce the Armour Value of all facings by -1 while it remains locked in combat or otherwise in base-to-base contact. This effect is not cumulative, and is applied only once regardless of the number of units with this Emanation in contact with a given unit. In addition, any reduction to a unit's Toughness characteristic imposed by this Emanation does not affect the victims' Instant Death threshold.

Brass Collars* (5/10/15 points per model in the unit): The unit gains the Adamantium Will special rule and an Armour Save of 3+.

Stupefying Musk* (3/10/10 points per model in the unit): Any unit charged by, or locked in combat with, a unit with this Emanation must take a Morale check at the beginning of any Fight sub-phase. If the check is failed then that unit must reduce its Initiative by 1 for the duration of that sub-phase.

Warp Scions* (3/-/- points per model in the unit): The unit gains the Brotherhood of Psykers special rule and a Mastery Level of 1. It may choose to use any one of the following powers: *Smite*, *Flame Breath*, *Assail* or *Psychic Shriek*. This must be chosen at the start of the game before deployment and may not be changed.

Corrosive Vomit (3/10/15 points per model in the unit): For every three models in the unit (rounding up), one model may attack during the Shooting phase using the following weapon's profile. The range and line of sight for the attack may be measured from any models in the unit, but if multiple attacks are made in a single Shooting phase then they must each be measured from separate models. The models chosen to perform these attacks may be changed in each Shooting phase:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Corrosive vomit	Template	User	5	Assault 1, Soul Blaze

Rift Barb (3/10/15 points): A single model in the unit may attack during the Shooting phase using the following weapon's profile. The range and line of sight for the attack may be measured from any model in the unit:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Rift barb	12"	User+2	3	Assault 1, Armourbane

Molten Blood (3/5/5 points per model in the unit): Whenever a model with this special rule suffers an unsaved wound, any enemy units locked in combat with it suffer a single Str (User), AP - hit.

Horned Crown (3/10/15 points per model in the unit): Grants the unit the Hammer of Wrath special rule. If the unit already has this special rule then the number of hits inflicted is increased from 1 to D3 (roll once per unit to determine the number of hits inflicted per model).

Warp-scaled Hide (5/15/25 points per model in the unit): A unit with this Emanation increases its Armour Save to 3+.

Quicksilver Speed (3/10/15 points per model in the unit): The unit gains the Fleet and Move Through Cover special rules.

Flaming Ichor (3/15/20 points per model in the unit): For every five models in the unit (or fraction thereof), one model may attack during the Shooting phase using the following weapon's profile (this counts as a flame type weapon). The range and line of sight of the attack may be measured from any models in the unit, but if multiple attacks are made in a single Shooting phase then they must each be measured from separate models:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Flaming ichor	12"	User	5	Assault 1, Blast (3"), Soul Blaze, Crawling Fire

Spine Volley (3/5/10 points per model in the unit): All models in the unit may attack during the Shooting phase using the following weapon's profile:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Spine volley	12"	User-1	5	Assault 2

Bone Shard Harpoons (3/5/10 points per model in the unit): All models in the unit may attack during the Shooting phase using the following weapon's profile:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Bone shard harpoon	12"	User	4	Assault 1, Pinning

Ephemeral Terror (1/5/- points per model in the unit): Models with this Emanation do not suffer the penalty to their Initiative for charging enemies through difficult terrain, but fight at their normal Initiative in the ensuing combat.

Shroud of Darkness (5/15/20 points per model in the unit): Models charging a unit with this Emanation do not gain bonus attacks from charging.

"Horus and the Emperor will between them surely grind Mankind to dust, and the vastness of space will be left empty for the use of such ghosts as choose to inhabit it."

Admiral Joss van Drarwhaal, in the aftermath of the Drussen Atrocity

Aetheric Dominions

Though mortal man might see the forces of the Warp as a unified host of monsters, this was far from the truth. Within the depths of the Warp there stirred a number of powers, each with its own agenda and desires, and each with its own hosts.

A Daemons of the Ruinstorm army may select a single Aetheric Dominion. As long as it forms the Primary Detachment of the army, the strictures of the chosen Dominion apply to all units and models in the Primary Detachment with the Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule. If the Daemons of the Ruinstorm army forms an Allied Detachment, it may select a Dominion, but the army may not choose to make use of its Special Objective or Warlord Trait table.

Resplendent Terror

Chaos in its purest form is a terror that few can stand before and remain sane. It hungers only for destruction, that all things mortal meet their predestined end and crumble into dust to be forgotten. A formless and eternal hatred whose only goal is the end of all that lives.

An army with this Dominion may select any Emanation of Hate, including those usually restricted to any of the other Aetheric Dominions.

Warlord Trait – When using this Aetheric Dominion, a Warlord Trait may be generated from any one of the Aetheric Dominion Warlord Trait tables.

In addition, an army whose Primary Detachment has this Dominion may choose to replace all other Primary Objectives in any mission with the following Primary Objective (their opponent's objectives remain unchanged, as do any Secondary Objectives in play):

End of Days: Each enemy unit destroyed, removed from play or forced to flee from the battlefield scores the Daemons of the Ruinstorm player 1 Victory point.

Crimson Fury
The dark fury of battle and the red joy of life's final end. For some among the hordes of the Warp, the only goal was to fight and to die – it mattered not where or why as long as blood flowed. For such vile warriors, the result of a battle was counted in skulls and death, whether friend or foe.

All models in the Detachment with the Infantry, Jump Pack Infantry, Beasts or Cavalry unit type gain the Rage special rule. Models with the Monstrous Creature, Flying Monstrous Creature, Gargantuan Creature or Gargantuan Flying Creature unit type instead gain the Rampage special rule.

All models in the Detachment must declare a charge if able when they begin the Assault phase within 12" of an enemy unit. If there is more than one eligible target, the controlling player chooses the target of any charges made.

Any unit in this Detachment may take the Brass Collars Emanation; if the unit consists of multiple models then all models in the unit must take this upgrade.

A Daemon Lord with this Dominion may choose to generate a Warlord Trait from the following table instead of any of those found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*:

D6	Warlord Trait
1-2	**Skull Keeper:** This Warlord and any friendly unit with the Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule within 6" of the Warlord may add +D3 to the Wounds value calculated to see if they win combat in the Assault phase.
3-4	**Aegis of Rage:** Each time this Warlord, or any friendly unit with the Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule within 12", is targeted by a Psychic Power, the Warlord may attempt to Deny the Witch as though they were a Psyker of a higher Mastery Level than the Psyker manifesting the power and a part of the unit being targeted (regardless of actual Mastery Levels). If the Deny the Witch attempt is failed, the Psychic Power is resolved as normal and affects only its original target.
5-6	**Path of Blood:** Whenever this Warlord declares a charge, it may roll a number of dice equal to its Attacks value to determine the distance moved, keeping the two highest results and discarding all other dice.

In addition, an army whose Primary Detachment has this Dominion may choose to replace all other Primary Objectives in any mission with the following Primary Objective (their opponent's objectives remain unchanged, as do any Secondary Objectives in play):

The Blood must Flow: The Daemons of the Ruinstorm player gains 1 Victory point for every unit (friendly or enemy) that has been destroyed either in combat, due to the results of an Overwatch attack or as part of a Sweeping Advance.

"Once betrayal and battle are upon you, success is found in following the racing heat of your blood, not the cold logic of your mind."

Attr. Qin Xa, strategist of the White Scars and advisor to the Great Khan

"Death alone moves the wheel of Imperium."

Alpharius, Primarch of the Alpha Legion

Creeping Scourge

An endless suffering, slow and painful, with no final release in death. Among the hosts of Chaos there were those who cared nothing for victory or defeat, only that suffering was spread to as many as possible. For such creatures it was by the spread of their vile gifts that they measured success, not by such a paltry measure as simple death.

All models in the Detachment with the Infantry, Jump Pack Infantry, Beasts or Cavalry unit type gain the Feel No Pain (5+) special rule. Models with the Monstrous Creature, Flying Monstrous Creature, Gargantuan Creature or Gargantuan Flying Creature unit type instead gain the It Will Not Die special rule.

Units included as part of this Detachment roll an additional D6 when making Run moves or Sweeping Advances and use the lowest rolled dice to determine the distance moved.

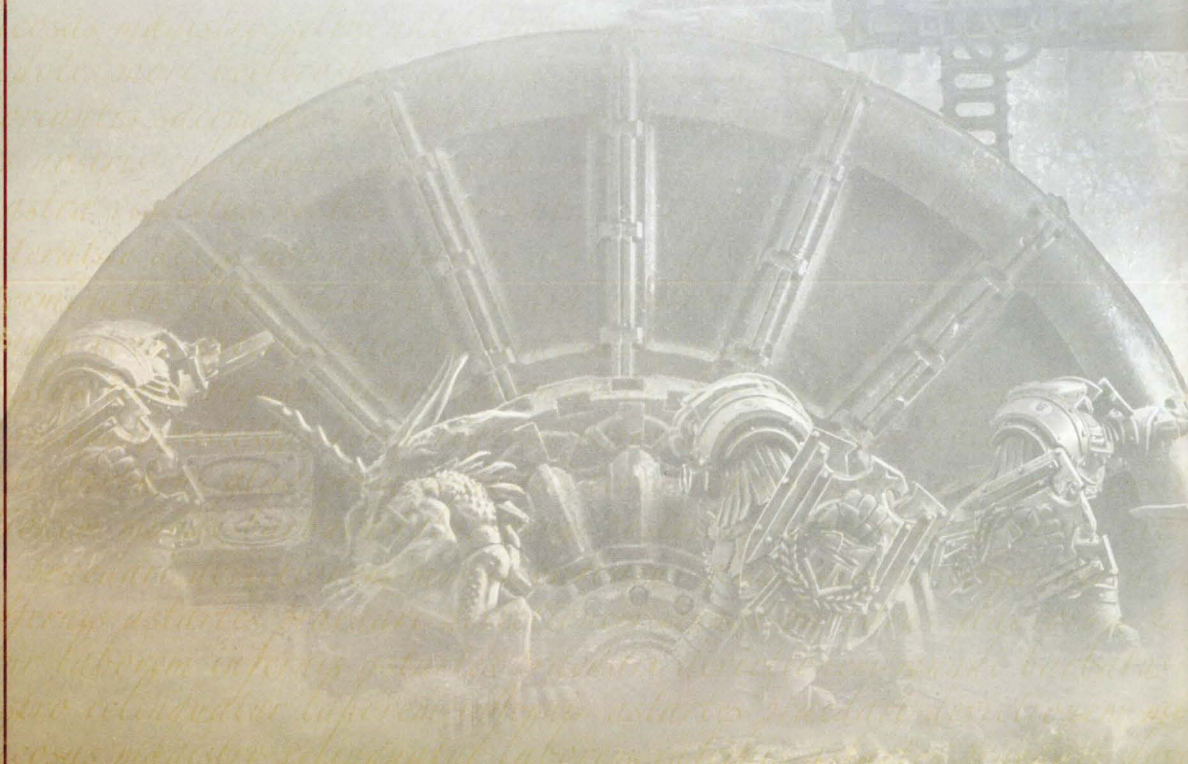
Any unit in this Detachment may take the Miasma of Rot Emanation; if the unit consists of multiple models then all models in the unit must take this upgrade.

A Daemon Lord with this Dominion may choose to generate a Warlord Trait from the following table instead of any of those found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*:

D6	Warlord Trait
1-2	**Blight Walker:** This Warlord and all friendly units with the Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule within 6" are considered to always roll a 6 when called upon to take Difficult Terrain tests and Dangerous Terrain tests.
3-4	**Monolith of Rot:** This Warlord may re-roll all failed Feel no Pain or It Will Not Die tests.
5-6	**Pestilent Cloud:** All units within 3" of this Warlord at the end of any Fight sub-phase that do not have the Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule suffer D6 Str 2, AP - hits. These hits and any casualties caused do not count for combat resolution.

In addition, an army whose Primary Detachment has this Dominion may choose to replace all other Primary Objectives in any mission with the following Primary Objective (their opponent's objectives remain unchanged, as do any Secondary Objectives in play):

Torment without End: At the end of the game, after the final turn has been played, the Daemons of the Ruinstorm player gains 2 Victory points for every table quarter that has a Warp Rift marker in it, no enemy units within 6" of that Warp Rift marker and at least one friendly Daemon of the Ruinstorm unit within 6" of that Rift marker.



Lurid Onslaught

A maddening screech of sensation and wild impulses. Life, death, victory and defeat – all one and the same. For some among the endless tide of insanity it truly mattered not the outcome of the fighting, merely that they were there to take part and to experience its vicissitudes, to force that lurid dream upon the foe, that was the only goal.

All models in the Detachment gain the Hit and Run special rule.

No unit included as part of this army may benefit from a cover save, except one provided by the Jink special rule.

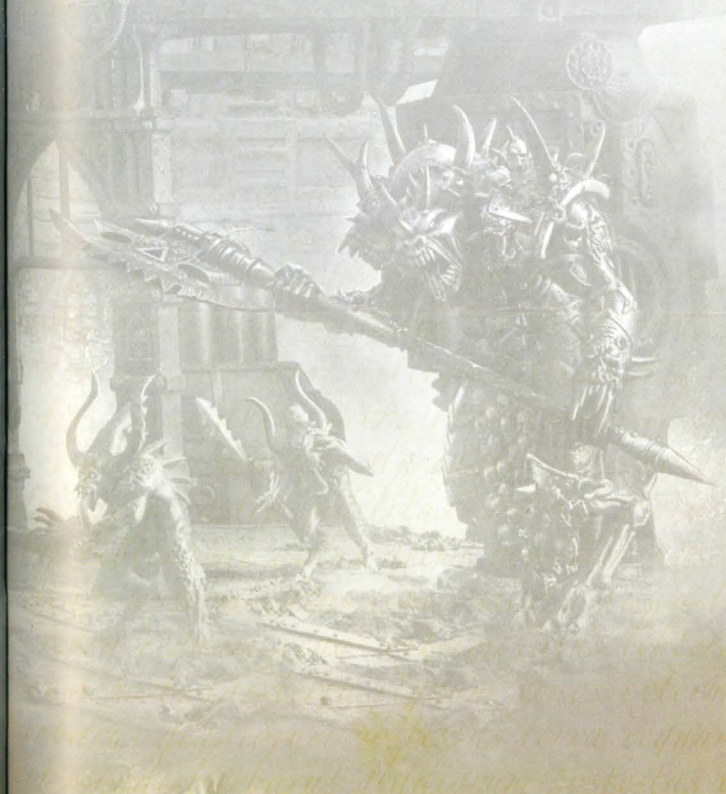
Any unit in this Detachment may take the Stupefying Musk Emanation; if the unit consists of multiple models then all models in the unit must take this upgrade.

A Daemon Lord with this Dominion may choose to generate a Warlord Trait from the following table instead of any of those found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*:

D6	Warlord Trait
1-2	**Inhuman Grace:** When fighting in a Challenge against a model with a higher Initiative value, the Initiative value of this Warlord is increased to be equal to that of its opponent.
3-4	**Flickering Gait:** This Warlord, and any friendly unit with the Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule within 6", do not roll dice when choosing to Run in the Shooting phase, but instead always move the maximum amount possible for that unit.
5-6	**Loping Charge:** This Warlord, and any friendly unit with the Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule within 6", add +1 to the distance moved when making a Charge in the Assault phase – this makes the maximum possible Charge distance for these units 13".

In addition, an army whose Primary Detachment has this Dominion may choose to replace all other Primary Objectives in any mission with the following Primary Objective (their opponent's objectives remain unchanged, as do any Secondary Objectives in play):

A Twisted Dream: The Daemons of the Ruinstorm player scores 1 Victory point whenever an enemy unit fails a Morale check (this does not include tests made to Regroup, but does include Pinning tests, Fear tests and checks made due to the Stupefying Musk Emanation). However, any enemy unit that succeeds at any of these checks due to a result of Insane Heroism (a double 1) reduces the total number of Victory points scored by this army by D3.



"By the Emperor's science Horus was born heir to the throne of the greatest empire ever created, and inheritor of a genetic legacy unsurpassed in this galaxy. Yet, in his hearts slumbered all the ancient sins of his forebears, which he, in his arrogance, left to fester till they bore bitter fruit. Better, perhaps, that he had lain undiscovered on dark Cthonia as a simple brute than raised into the light of the Emperor."

Attr. Ratio Nebulin, senior advisor to the offices of the Administratum

"Few men know the stars as I do. I have supped with demagogues and prophets, scholars and martyrs."

Iben ul'Faid, Captain of the Rogue Trader Illustrious Virtue

Maddening Swarms

Twisting, changing and perverting, the raw power of Chaos was a power to be reckoned with, a power that the Emperor Himself had tried and failed to contain. Some of its servants saw no higher purpose than the promulgation of that power, of its profligate use on the battlefields of the mortal realm. By the demonstration of its power, did they count their victories.

All models in the Detachment may select an additional Emanation of Horror.

Any unit capable of manifesting a psychic power, which does not attempt to do so during the controlling player's Psychic phase, must roll an extra dice for all Morale checks and Leadership tests for the remainder of the game turn and use the two highest dice rolled to calculate the result of that test.

Any unit that consists of more than one model may select the Warp Scions Emanation.

A Daemon Lord with this Dominion may choose to generate a Warlord Trait from the following table instead of any of those found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*:

D6	Warlord Trait
1-2	**Font of Madness:** In each Psychic phase, this Warlord generates Warp Charge points equal to its Mastery Level +1. If this Warlord does not have the Psyker special rule then it generates D3 Warp Charge points per Psychic phase (this does not allow them to manifest Psychic Powers).
3-4	**Aetheric Lightning Rod:** For each unit with the Psyker special rule within 6" of this Warlord during a given Assault phase, it gains an additional attack in close combat.
5-6	**Oracle of Chaos:** When making any rolls to determine when friendly Reserves arrive in play or for which table edge friendly Outflanking units arrive on, the dice may be re-rolled while this Warlord is both alive and deployed upon the battlefield.

In addition, an army whose Primary Detachment has this Dominion may choose to replace all other Primary Objectives in any mission with the following Primary Objective (their opponent's objectives remain unchanged, as do any Secondary Objectives in play):

Warp Conflagration: Each enemy unit destroyed, removed from play or forced to flee the table by a Psychic Power or by wounds caused by a Psychic Power scores 1 Victory point for the Daemons of the Ruinstorm player. In addition, if 4 or more Warp Charge points were allocated to a power that destroys or otherwise removes from play an enemy unit then it scores 1 additional Victory point for the Daemons of the Ruinstorm player.

Mirror of Hatred

Such is the hatred that swirls within the Warp that it encompasses all things, and like the dragon of eternity that feasts upon its own tail, this hatred extends even to itself. To expect rational and sane logic from creatures such as these would be foolish, for Chaos was both its name and nature. Yet, in its self-destructive hatred there was no ally to be found, only a new and more unpredictable foe.

All models in the Detachment gain the Hatred (Daemons, Daemons of the Ruinstorm & Psykers) special rule.

An army using this Aetheric Dominion for its Primary Detachment may not include an Allied Detachment.

A Daemon Lord with this Dominion may choose to generate a Warlord Trait from the following table instead of any of those found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*:

D6	Warlord Trait
1-2	**The All is One:** When this Warlord is involved in a Challenge against a model with any of the Psyker, Daemon or Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rules, the controlling player may choose to use the Weapon Skill and/or Initiative characteristics of the opposing model for the duration of a given Fight phase. This does not alter the characteristics of the opposing model.
3-4	**Avatar of Hatred:** This Warlord gains the effects of Hatred (Daemons, Daemons of the Ruinstorm and Psykers) during any Fight Sub-phase, not just the first.
5-6	**Inimitable Recursion:** When a Warlord with this trait is reduced to 0 Wounds, roll a D6. On the roll of a 6+, the model is placed into Ongoing Reserves with all of its Wounds returned instead of being removed from play. This Warlord Trait may be used more than once in a given battle, and there is no limit to the number of times a model may be returned to Ongoing Reserves. However, once this roll is failed, the model may not be returned to play by any other means. If the Slay the Warlord Secondary Objective is in play, then it may be scored each time this Warlord is reduced to 0 Wounds.

In addition, an army whose Primary Detachment has this Dominion may choose to replace all other Primary Objectives in any mission with the following Primary Objective (their opponent's objectives remain unchanged):

The Infinite Cycle: The Daemons of the Ruinstorm player scores 1 Victory point for each enemy unit with any of the Psyker, Daemon or Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rules that is destroyed, removed from play or forced to flee from the battlefield, and loses 1 Victory point for each friendly unit with any of the Psyker, Daemon or Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rules that is destroyed, removed from play or forced to flee from the battlefield. If, at the end of the game, the Daemons of the Ruinstorm player has scored exactly zero Victory points then they are considered to have won, regardless of the number of Victory points scored by their opponent.

"Though fury can be wielded as a weapon, few truths can be found in wroth."

From the teachings of Targutai Yesugei of the White Scars Stormseer Council

0-1 Ruinstorm Daemon Lord

200 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ruinstorm Daemon Lord	6	5	8	6	6	4	5	10	4+
Ruinstorm Daemon Brute	4	4	6	6	3	4	3	8	4+

HQ

These creatures were the rulers of the Ruinstorm's hordes, the primary incarnation of the hidden powers of the Warp whose dark desires drove the horde onwards and into battle. No two such creatures were alike, but each yet shared some similarities, for all were formidable warriors in their own right and possessed of a malignant cunning. In battle, they were a match for even the finest of the Legiones Astartes, capable of crushing armoured tanks and tearing lesser warriors apart, while as commanders and warlords they were ruthless in the prosecution of the insane wars to which they were committed.

In form, there was little to match one to another, save that all were towering in stature and terrifying of visage in their own fashion. Of all of the shifting mass of Daemon-kind, it was these creatures that were best known to the scholars of Mankind, for many fit the skein of ancient legend, terrors that stalked the nightmares of history. Some would acquire new titles and dark legends as they carved bloody paths across the stars, haunting the edges of the Horus Heresy and claiming a toll in lives as tribute for their masters and the powers to which Horus had pledged himself and his legions.

Unit Composition
- Ruinstorm Daemon Lord

Unit Type
- Ruinstorm Daemon Lord: Monstrous Creature (Character)
- Ruinstorm Daemon Brute: Infantry

Wargear
- Close combat weapon (claws, Daemonic blades, horns, etc.)

Special Rules
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tide of Madness
- Parting the Veil
- Vanguard of Hell
- Lord of Chaos (Ruinstorm Daemon Lord only)
- Eternal Warrior (Ruinstorm Daemon Lord only)
- Hammer of Wrath (Ruinstorm Daemon Brutes only)
- Guardian Daemon (Ruinstorm Daemon Brutes only)

Options
- The Ruinstorm Daemon Lord may select up to three Emanations of Horror. These do not need to be the same as those taken by any Ruinstorm Daemon Brutes included in this unit.
- May change its type to:
  - Flying Monstrous Creature (Character).....+30 points
  This option may not be selected if any Ruinstorm Daemon Brutes are part of the unit.
- The unit may include:
  - Up to three Ruinstorm Daemon Brutes .....+50 points each
- The Ruinstorm Daemon Brutes in this unit may take up to two Emanations of Horror. All of the Ruinstorm Brutes must have the same Emanations of Horror.

Lord of Chaos
A Ruinstorm Daemon Lord must always be the army's Warlord.

Guardian Daemon
When a unit that includes one or more models with this special rule suffers hits during the Shooting phase, those hits must be allocated to models with this special rule first, before any other model, regardless of position or line of sight.

Vanguard of Hell
On the first turn of the game, if a unit is composed entirely of models with this special rule, then no roll is made to see if it enters play. Instead, the controlling player may choose whether it comes into play without rolling.

If the unit remains in Ongoing Reserves, or re-enters Ongoing Reserves, then it must be rolled for as normal on subsequent turns.

Flying Monstrous Creature
When entering play, a Ruinstorm Daemon Lord upgraded to a Flying Monstrous Creature may choose to either enter play Gliding or Swooping in its initial movement. The movement mode used must be declared before the Reserves roll for the unit is made.

Ka'bandha, Daemon General of Signus

460 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ka'bandha	9	5	8	7	8	6	7	10	3+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Flying Monstrous Creature (Character)

Wargear
- Close combat weapon (Daemonic axe and whip)
- Molten Blood Emanation of Horror
- Brass Collars Emanation of Horror
- Horned Crown Emanation of Horror

Special Rules
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tides of Madness
- Parting the Veil
- Vanguard of Hell
- Lord of Murder
- Miasma of Rage
- Sunder
- It Will Not Die
- Scythe of Hatred
- Eternal Rivalry

Lord of Murder
Ka'bandha may only be selected as part of an army using the Crimson Fury Aetheric Dominion, and must be the army's Warlord. Ka'bhanda uses the Skull Keeper Warlord Trait from the Crimson Fury Aetheric Dominion Warlord table, and gains the Eternal Warrior special rule.

Miasma of Rage
Ka'bandha, and any models within 12", adds +1 to the result of any rolls made to determine how many attacks it is granted by the Rampage special rule (granted to it by the Crimson Fury Aetheric Dominion). In addition, Ka'bandha gains a 4+ invulnerable save as long as it is currently locked in combat or involved in a Challenge.

Vanguard of Hell
On the first turn of the game, if a unit is composed entirely of models with this special rule then no roll is made to see if it enters play. Instead, the controlling player may choose whether it comes into play without rolling.

If the unit remains in Ongoing Reserves or re-enters Ongoing Reserves, then it must be rolled for as normal on subsequent turns.

Scythe of Hatred
At the end of any Assault phase, after the results of any combats have been worked out and Sweeping Advances and Consolidations have been completed, Ka'bandha may release its fury as a tremendous strike that damages any who are caught in its path. To resolve this attack, the controlling player should place a Hellstorm template angled in any direction of their choice and with the narrow end in contact with Ka'bandha's base. Any units underneath the template suffer a number of hits equal to the number of wounds Ka'bandha caused during the preceding Assault phase, each at Str 6, AP -.

Eternal Rivalry
If any enemy army includes Sanguinius, Ka'bandha gains the Preferred Enemy (Sanguinius) and Hatred (Sanguinius) special rules and the following Secondary Objective is placed into effect:

Eternal Rivalry: If Sanguinius is removed as a casualty while it is fighting in a Challenge against Ka'bandha, the Daemons of the Ruinstorm player scores 2 Victory points – this is in addition to any points scored for Slay the Warlord. However, if Ka'bandha is removed as a casualty while it is fighting in a Challenge against Sanguinius, then the Daemons of the Ruinstorm player instead loses 1 Victory point.

Flying Monstrous Creature
When entering play, Ka'bandha may choose to either enter play Gliding or Swooping in its initial movement. The movement mode used must be declared before the Reserves roll for the unit is made.

HQ

Of all the dark legends spawned by the Daemonic incursions that would hit the Imperium during the Age of Darkness, that of Ka'bandha would cast a vast shadow across history. This bat-winged terror, clad in impenetrable bronze plate and capable of cleaving a dozen men with each swing of its talons and hell-forged weapons, would bring about the end of dozens of worlds, scouring them clean with fire and with fury.

Of those worlds and armies it appeared before, none would survive as anything other than burnt out ruins and blackened corpses or ritually stacked bones – none, except for the Blood Angels and their angel-winged sire. It would be Ka'bandha's battle against the IXth Legion that would define it and shake the very foundations of the Imperium, from the bloody plains of Signus Prime to the gates of the Imperial Palace on Terra. By its clawed hand would a Primarch be brought low and a Legion branded with a curse born of a Daemon's hatred and their own hubris.

Time and time again Ka'bandha would tear free from the bowels of the Warp to loose fury and hatred upon the Blood Angels, and though repulsed each time, the cost of the victory in lives and ruined worlds would never be cheap.

HQ

A constant presence in the legends and history of Sixty-Three Nineteen, the malignant whispers of Samus were said to have driven entire civilisations insane with paranoia and fear. Capable of possessing any but the most warded of souls, the Daemon Prince took great pleasure in turning its host upon their companions, slaughtering those who moments before had been comrades-in-arms, friends or even family.

A blight on those loyal to the Emperor during the Horus Heresy, little is recorded regarding the Imperium's first encounter with Samus as a bound servitor of one of many enemies vanquished during the Great Crusade. However, the advent of the Ruinstorm would see it return to plague the worlds of Mankind once again, not as a lowly servant bound in wards, but of its own dark volition, unbound and unbeholden to any mortal agenda. In the grim chaos of the Age of Darkness, Samus would wield its full strength to wreak a trail of devastation across the wounded Imperium, kindling a new and terrible legend for itself.

Samus Unbound, Daemon Lord of the Ruinstorm

415 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Samus Unbound	9	5	8	7	7	9	6	10	3+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Monstrous Creature (Character)

Wargear
- Close combat weapon (claws, fangs and Daemonic blade)
- Molten Blood Emanation of Horror
- Brass Collars Emanation of Horror
- Quicksilver Speed Emanation of Horror

Special Rules
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tides of Madness
- Parting the Veil
- Lord of Murder
- Armourbane
- Murderous Strike
- It Will Not Die
- Born of Murder
- Whispers of Madness

Lord of Murder
Samus Unbound may only be selected as part of an army using the Resplendent Terror Aetheric Dominion, and must be the army's Warlord. Samus Unbound uses the Path of Blood Warlord Trait from the Crimson Fury Aetheric Dominion Warlord Trait table, and gains the Eternal Warrior special rule.

Born of Murder
If a model with the Character type is killed on any turn before Samus Unbound is deployed, place a counter or other marker within 3" of where they died. On the controlling player's next turn, this marker is treated as a Warp Rift marker for this turn only, following all the standard rules for Warp Rifts as detailed in the Parting the Veil rule, with the exception that no Daemons of the Ruinstorm model other than Samus Unbound may be deployed using this Warp Rift marker. After the controlling player's turn, the Warp Rift marker is removed.

When being deployed in this manner, Samus Unbound does not need to pass a Reserves roll. Instead, Samus Unbound is automatically deployed.

This special rule does not prevent Samus Unbound being deployed earlier in the game using the standard Parting the Veil rule.

Whispers of Madness
If Samus Unbound is part of your army, all enemy Reserves rolls are made at -1, regardless of whether or not Samus is in play. In addition, enemy models placed in Ongoing Reserves will fail to appear on any particular turn on a D6 roll of 1.

If Samus Unbound is part of your army, the Warp Charge cost of any **blessing** type Psychic Power used during the game (by either side) is increased by +1.

Models in combat with Samus Unbound, as well as those taking Fear tests in order to charge Samus Unbound, have their Leadership value halved unless they have the Stubborn or Fearless special rules.

Designer's note: *This profile does not invalidate previously released profiles for the Daemon Lord Samus, rather this specific profile represents the unbound incarnation of that ancient Daemonic entity intended to be used as part of a Daemons of the Ruinstorm army.*

Cor'bax Utterblight Unbound, Daemon Lord of the Ruinstorm

425 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Cor'bax Utterblight	6	3	7	8	8	3	5	10	4+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Monstrous Creature (Character)

Wargear
- Close combat weapon (talons, fetid bulk, fanged maw)
- Shroud of Darkness Emanation of Horror
- Miasma of Rot Emanation of Horror
- Crushing Claws Emanation of Horror

Special Rules
- Lord of Decay
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tides of Madness
- Parting the Veil
- Psyker (Mastery Level 2)
- Gaping Maw
- Noisome Tide of Flesh

Lord of Decay
Cor'bax Utterblight Unbound may only be selected as part of an army which uses the Creeping Scourge Aetheric Dominion, and must be the army's Warlord. Cor'bax Utterblight Unbound uses the Pestilent Cloud Warlord Trait from the Creeping Scourge Aetheric Dominion Warlord Trait table, and gains the Eternal Warrior special rule.

Psyker
Cor'bax Utterblight Unbound has the Psyker special rule and two levels of Psychic Mastery, it may generate powers from the Biomancy discipline only.

Gaping Maw
When fighting against Infantry models, any To Hit rolls of 5 or 6 made in the Assault phase by Cor'bax have the Instant Death special rule. Roll To Wound and save with these attacks separately.

Noisome Tide of Flesh
Cor'bax Utterblight Unbound inflicts D3 Hammer of Wrath hits when charging. It ignores all dangerous terrain and difficult terrain. It counts as being armed with assault grenades when charging. In addition, if it is destroyed replace its model with the Massive Blast (7") template. All models under the template that do not have the Daemon or Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule suffer a single Poisoned (4+) AP 4 hit – if this affects a Vehicle model, treat the Strength of any hits inflicted as 2.

Designer's note: *This profile does not invalidate previously released profiles for the Daemon Lord Cor'bax, rather this specific profile represents the unbound incarnation of that ancient Daemonic entity intended to be used as part of a Daemons of the Ruinstorm army.*

HQ

Summoned forth during the Horus Heresy by the treacherous Word Bearers Legion, Cor'bax Utterblight was one of the most powerful Daemons to appear within the hordes of the Ruinstorm. Few accounts exist regarding its vile actions, most dragged from the insane minds of those unfortunate enough to survive an encounter with the Daemon Prince, but those that do speak of tidal waves of rot and decay that brought plague to all living things in their path.

As with many of the ancient terrors of the Warp, the resurgence of power heralded by the Ruinstorm was to signal the return of Cor'bax, now unbound by the limitations of ward or ban. Free to indulge its own cruel whims, the corpulent creature would leave a trail of decay and blight that plunged many sectors into a new age of suffering and darkness, a new paean of horror for the powers Cor'bax served.

HQ

Among the vast throngs of misshapen and hideous creatures that formed the armies of the Warp these were the captains and champions. Some were vast and terrifying creatures whose sheer strength was plied on the battlefield to devastating effect, while other lesser creatures were the hordes marshals and drill masters, directing the uncounted throngs of their kin into the ranks of the enemy. These creatures were all formidable foes, untiring and indomitable regardless of their size. Each was a killer honed by centuries of spite and hatred, a weapon forged in the Warp for the sole purpose of bringing suffering and death to mortal man. As with others of their kith they existed in such a plethora of malign forms that any attempt to catalogue their variations is doomed to failure, and each was deadly in its own right. They existed to serve as extensions of their masters, a keen blade to be wielded by the will of the Daemon Lords of their horde and a bane to those who stood against them.

Ruinstorm Greater Daemon (HQ) — 160 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ruinstorm Greater Daemon	5	4	7	6	5	4	4	10	4+

Unit Composition
- Ruinstorm Greater Daemon

Unit Type
- Monstrous Creature (Character)

Wargear
- Close combat weapon (claws, Daemonic blades, horns, etc.)

Special Rules
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tides of Madness
- Parting the Veil

Options
- The unit may select up to three options from the Emanations of Horror list.

Ruinstorm Daemon Chosen (HQ) — 50 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ruinstorm Daemon Chosen	5	4	5	4	3	4	3	10	4+

Unit Composition
- 1 Ruinstorm Daemon Chosen

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Close combat weapon (claws, Daemonic blades, horns, etc.)

Special Rules
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tides of Madness
- Parting the Veil
- Independent Character
- Shepherd of Malign Intent

Options
- The unit may select up to three options from the Emanations of Horror list.

Shepherd of Malign Intent
At the start of the game, before any models are deployed, this model may be given one special rule from the list presented below. Once chosen, this special rule may not be changed for the duration of the game:

- Preferred Enemy (Infantry)
- Preferred Enemy (Bike, Jetbike and Cavalry)
- Preferred Enemy (Monstrous Creature and Flying Monstrous Creature)

Ruinstorm Daemon Brutes

150 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ruinstorm Daemon Brute	4	4	6	6	3	4	3	8	4+

Unit Composition
- 3 Ruinstorm Daemon Brutes

Unit Type
- Infantry

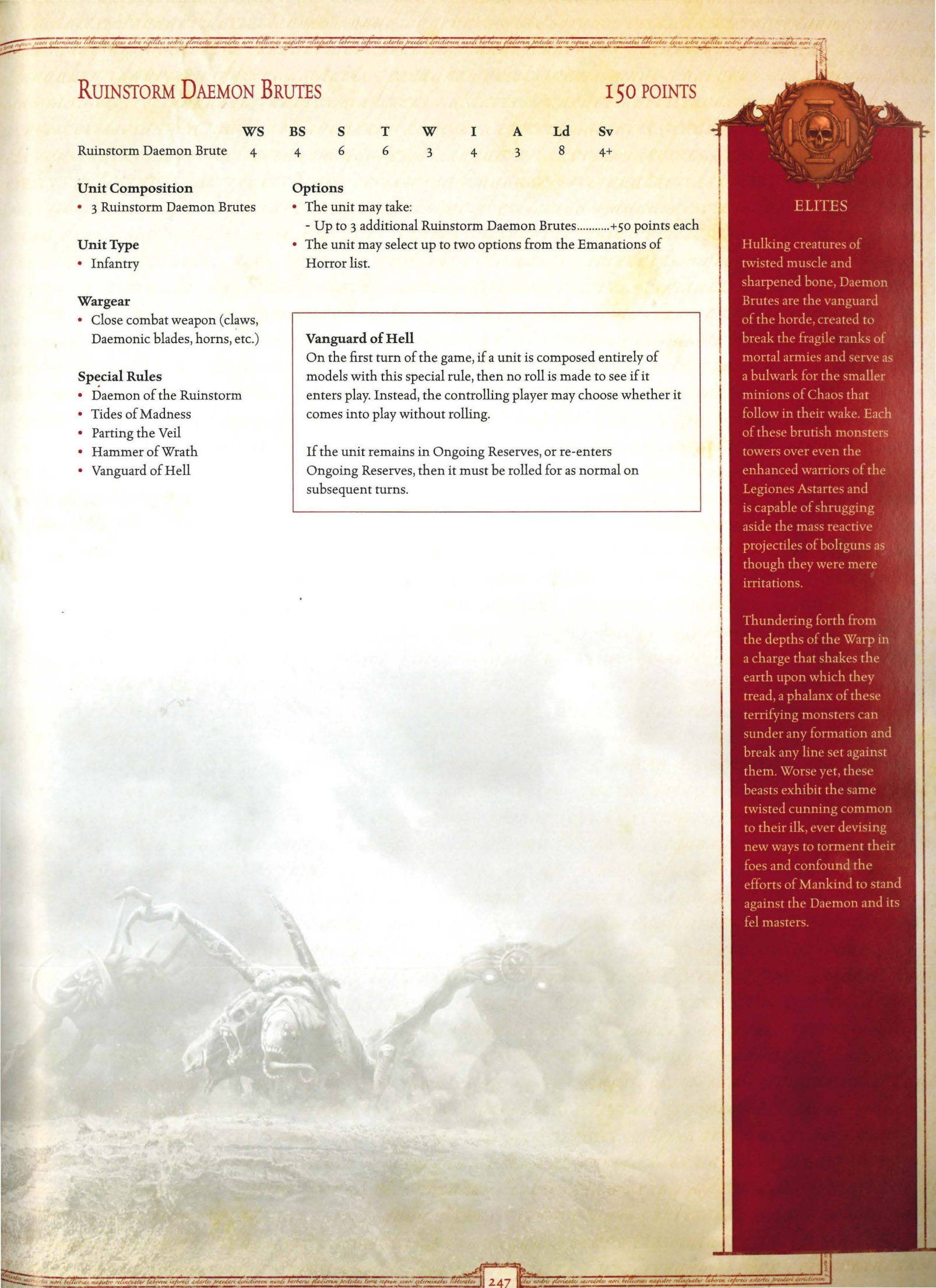
Wargear
- Close combat weapon (claws, Daemonic blades, horns, etc.)

Special Rules
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tides of Madness
- Parting the Veil
- Hammer of Wrath
- Vanguard of Hell

Options
- The unit may take:
  - Up to 3 additional Ruinstorm Daemon Brutes.....+50 points each
- The unit may select up to two options from the Emanations of Horror list.

Vanguard of Hell
On the first turn of the game, if a unit is composed entirely of models with this special rule, then no roll is made to see if it enters play. Instead, the controlling player may choose whether it comes into play without rolling.

If the unit remains in Ongoing Reserves, or re-enters Ongoing Reserves, then it must be rolled for as normal on subsequent turns.



ELITES

Hulking creatures of twisted muscle and sharpened bone, Daemon Brutes are the vanguard of the horde, created to break the fragile ranks of mortal armies and serve as a bulwark for the smaller minions of Chaos that follow in their wake. Each of these brutish monsters towers over even the enhanced warriors of the Legiones Astartes and is capable of shrugging aside the mass reactive projectiles of boltguns as though they were mere irritations.

Thundering forth from the depths of the Warp in a charge that shakes the earth upon which they tread, a phalanx of these terrifying monsters can sunder any formation and break any line set against them. Worse yet, these beasts exhibit the same twisted cunning common to their ilk, ever devising new ways to torment their foes and confound the efforts of Mankind to stand against the Daemon and its fel masters.

TROOPS

These loathsome creatures make up the bulk of the daemonic hordes loosed by the Ruinstorm upon an ailing Imperium, distinguished from their fellows only by their lesser stature, for as with every breed of daemonkind they were to be found in a profusion of shapes and colours that defied any mortal logic. Though sometimes accounted the 'lesser' of the various Daemons or dismissed as simple beasts and vermin, each was still a formidable terror of war, capable of rending ceramite with ease and a match for the mighty Legiones Astartes in sheer strength and resilience. Herded into battle by the towering monsters that led the hordes, it would be these creatures which would pillage and burn the vulnerable worlds of the Imperium while Horus and his brothers waged war, set loose in uncounted hordes by the artifice of Lorgar.

Ruinstorm Lesser Daemons (troops) — 60 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ruinstorm Lesser Daemon	4	4	4	4	2	4	2	7	4+

Unit Composition
- 5 Ruinstorm Lesser Daemons

Unit Type
- Infantry

Wargear
- Close combat weapon (claws, Daemonic blades, horns, etc.)

Special Rules
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tides of Madness
- Parting the Veil

Options
- The unit may take:
  - Up to 15 additional Ruinstorm Lesser Daemons .....+12 points each
- The unit may select up to three options from the Emanations of Horror list.

Ruinstorm Daemon Beasts (troops) — 75 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ruinstorm Daemon Beasts	4	4	5	5	2	4	2	7	4+

Unit Composition
- 3 Ruinstorm Daemon Beasts

Unit Type
- Beasts

Wargear
- Close combat weapon (claws, Daemonic blades, horns, etc.)

Special Rules
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tides of Madness
- Parting the Veil

Options
- The unit may take:
  - Up to 7 additional Ruinstorm Daemon Beasts .....+25 points each
- The unit may select up to two options from the Emanations of Horror list.

Ruinstorm Daemon Swarms (troops) — 60 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ruinstorm Daemon Swarms	2	2	2	3	4	3	D6	7	4+

Unit Composition
- 3 Ruinstorm Daemon Swarms

Unit Type
- Infantry

Wargear
- Close combat weapon (claws, Daemonic blades, horns, etc.)

Special Rules
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tides of Madness
- Parting the Veil
- Support Unit
- Swarms

Options
- The unit may take:
  - Up to 7 additional Ruinstorm Daemon Swarms.....+20 points each
- The unit may select one option from the Emanations of Horror list.

Ruinstorm Possessed

50 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Possessed Legionary	4	4	4	4	1	3	2	9	3+
Possessed Auxiliary	3	3	3	3	1	2	1	9	5+

Unit Composition
- 10 Possessed Auxiliaries

Unit Type
- Infantry

Wargear (Possessed Auxilia)
- Close combat weapon
- Auxilia rifle

Wargear (Possessed Legionary)
- Close combat weapon
- Boltgun
- Power armour

Special Rules
- Slaves to Darkness
- Support Unit

Options
- •The unit may include:
  - Up to 10 additional Possessed Auxilia for ..... +5 points each
- All Possessed Auxilia in the unit may exchange their Auxilia rifle for a:
  - Laspistol ..... Free
- For every five Possessed Auxilia in the unit, one model may exchange its Auxilia rifle for one of the following options:
  - Heavy stubber ..... +10 points per model
  - Rotor cannon ..... +10 points per model
  - Flamer ..... +10 points per model
  - Plasma gun ..... +15 points per model
  - Meltagun ..... +15 points per model
  - Grenade launcher (frag & krak) ..... +10 points per model
- All Possessed Auxilia in the unit may be upgraded to:
  - Possessed Legionaries ..... +5 points per model
- All Possessed Legionaries in the unit may exchange their boltgun for a:
  - Bolt pistol ..... Free
- For every five Possessed Legionaries in the unit, one model may exchange its boltgun for one of the following options:
  - Flamer ..... +10 points per model
  - Plasma gun ..... +15 points per model
  - Melta gun ..... +15 points per model
- One Possessed Legionary in the unit may choose to exchange its close combat weapon for one of the following:
  - Power weapon ..... +10 points
  - Power fist ..... +15 points
  - Single lightning claw ..... +15 points
  - Thunder hammer ..... +20 points

Slaves to Darkness
This unit may not control objectives and Independent Characters may not join it. In addition, no player may ever score Victory points for the destruction or removal of this unit from play.

Note that as this unit does not have the Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule, it gains no benefit from an Aetheric Dominion and does not start the game in reserve automatically or deploy using Warp Rifts. Instead, it is deployed normally within the standard deployment zone in use for the mission being played. This allows for a number of tactical gambits on the part of a Daemons of the Ruinstorm player, from protecting critical rifts set up within their traditional deployment zone, to increasing available firepower in early turns of the game or providing a cheap, disposable force for locking down flanks and dispersing enemy units.

TROOPS

Little more than meat puppets playing host to the ephemeral essence of Daemons, the Possessed were created from the ranks of the battlefield wounded, corpses still whole enough to clutch a weapon and those weak-willed enough to fall prey to the manipulations of the Warp. Shambling and listless creatures, the possessed were no longer truly human but rather a mindless husk enslaved to the will of the Warp and one which served as the first wave of any Daemonic incursion. They prepared the way for their fully formed kin, salting the earth and sacrificing the innocent to weaken the hold of reality, and depleting the munitions of those who might stand against them.

These simple abominations were much different from Lorgar's careful fusions of human and Daemon, for they were not willing partnerships but instead a violent subsumation of the original will in favour of the Daemonic. Worse still, such abhorrent creations could not long survive, as the Daemonic will within would slowly twist and corrupt the mortal flesh of its host, warping it to a form more suited to the perverted consciousness that was now its master. Yet, few vessels could withstand such a flesh-change and most lasted but a short span before expiring, casting the Daemon back to the formless reality of the Warp.

FAST ATTACK

Existing perhaps as a mockery of mortal armies, fabrications aping the legends of old or even some bizarre symbiotic perversion of the Warp itself, Daemon hosts often include crude forms of cavalry and air support. Rarely are such creatures ordered according to military logic, where cavalry and its aerial cousins serve as a mobile strike force, but are instead slaved to the dark will of Chaos.

The cavalry of the Daemon hosts is as varied as its foot soldiers, from lithe and swift coursers to vast plodding juggernauts, and rarely bound to the vagaries of mortal tactics. Shrikes are among the towering champions of the Daemonic hosts and boast wings vast enough, or sorcery powerful enough, to bear their huge forms into the air, some in the form of bat-winged beasts and others scaled and dragonlike monstrosities or even vast, rotting vultures. The sight of these creatures circling in the skies has become one of the most enduring legends of the Dark Age of the Horus Heresy, bat-winged avatars of destruction to mark the fall of an empire and the end of days.

Ruinstorm Daemon Calvary (Fast Attack) — 125 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ruinstorm Daemon Cavalry	4	4	4	4	2	4	3	7	4+

Unit Composition
- 5 Ruinstorm Daemon Cavalry

Unit Type
- Cavalry

Wargear
- Close combat weapon (claws, Daemonic blades, horns, etc.)

Special Rules
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tides of Madness
- Parting the Veil

Options
- The unit may take:
  - Up to 5 additional Ruinstorm Daemon Cavalry .....+25 points each
- The unit may select up to two options from the Emanations of Horror list.

Ruinstorm Daemon Shrike (Fast Attack) — 160 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ruinstorm Daemon Shrike	4	4	7	6	5	4	4	10	4+

Unit Composition
- 1 Ruinstorm Daemon Shrike

Unit Type
- Flying Monstrous Creature (Character)

- Wargear
- Close combat weapon (claws, Daemonic blades, horns, etc.)

Special Rules
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tides of Madness
- Parting the Veil

Options
- The unit may select up to two options from the Emanations of Horror list.

Flying Monstrous Creature
When entering play, a Ruinstorm Daemon Shrike may choose to either enter play Gliding or Swooping in its initial movement. The movement mode used must be declared before the Reserves roll for the unit is made.

Greater Ruinstorm Daemon Beast (heavy support) — 100 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Greater Beast	4	4	8	6	4	3	3	7	4+

Unit Composition
- 1 Greater Ruinstorm Daemon Beast

Unit Type
- Monstrous Creature

Wargear
- Close combat weapon (claws, Daemonic blades, horns, etc.)

Special Rules
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tides of Madness
- Parting the Veil

Options
- The unit may select up to three options from the Emanations of Horror list.
- The unit may take:
  - Up to two additional Greater Ruinstorm Daemon Beasts..... +100 points each

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Ruinstorm Daemon Behemoths (heavy support) — 300 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ruinstorm Daemon Behemoth	4	4	8	7	10	2	5	7	4+

Unit Composition
- Ruinstorm Daemon Behemoth

Unit Type
- Monstrous Creature

Wargear
- Close combat weapon (claws, Daemonic blades, horns, etc.)

Special Rules
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tides of Madness
- Parting the Veil
- Unstoppable

Options
- The unit may select up to three options from the Emanations of Horror list.

Unstoppable
Any attack that normally inflicts Instant Death, or says that the target model is removed from play, instead inflicts D3 wounds on a model with this special rule. In addition, attacks made with the Sniper or Poisoned special rules only cause a wound on a roll of 6 (unless the attacker's Strength would cause a wound on a lower result).

HEAVY SUPPORT

Vast beyond the comprehension of mortal warriors, titans of flailing tentacles and grinding teeth, the largest monstrosities of the Daemon hordes were death incarnate. The least blow from their talons could smash tanks and the tread of their feet crushed mere infantry like ants, animate war engines fired by hate and pain, and unleashed upon the cowering warriors of the enemy.

They were employed as animate war engines, set against the strongest defences to force a breach for the horde that followed at their heels, serving as a focus for the heavy guns of the mortal armies that stood against them. Only a concentrated barrage of heavy cannon would bring down such monstrosities, and even then the vile energy of the Warp stole any guarantee that death would be more than a temporary stall from their brutal wrath.

Ruinstorm Arch-Daemon

600 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ruinstorm Arch-Daemon	6	5	9	8	10	3	6	10	4+

Unit Composition
- 1 Ruinstorm Arch-Daemon

Unit Type
- Gargantuan Creature (Character)

Wargear
- Close combat weapon (claws, Daemonic blades, horns, etc.)

Special Rules
- Daemon of the Ruinstorm
- Tides of Madness
- Parting the Veil

Options
- The Arch-Daemon may select up to three options from the following:
  - Lord of Chaos ..... +50 points
  - Reaper of Souls ..... +25 points
  - Breaker of Titans ..... +35 points
  - Font of the Warp ..... +100 points
  - Wound in Reality ..... +25 points
  - Beyond Death ..... +50 points
  - Torrent of Unreality ..... +30 points
  - Warp Blast ..... +35 points
  - Rend Time and Space ..... +50 points
  - Warp-forged Plate ..... +50 points
- May change its type to:
  - Flying Gargantuan Creature (Character) ..... +100 points

LORDS OF WAR

Rare is the storm that can wake such ancient and terrible incarnations of the Warp as these, for the Arch-Daemons of the Ruinstorm are the equal of even the Imperium's towering Battle Titans. Reflections of the most basic and fundamental currents of the strange aetheric dimension that spawns them, Arch-Daemons are unlike their kin, savage and inscrutable, often acting upon whims that run counter to the plans of their lesser kind and perhaps serve some unknown goal of the hidden powers that rule the Warp.

When they deign to walk upon the fields of battle, it is a sign of the end times for the unfortunate world that plays host to their appearance, for they leave little in their wake but death and destruction. Among the champions of Mankind there are few who can stand before such might and hope to survive, and it is a great fortune that such monsters appear only rarely in the mortal realms.

Arch-Daemon Emanations
The following comprises options for use by Ruinstorm Arch-Daemons:

Lord of Chaos: A model with this option gains a 4+ Invulnerable save against Shooting attacks and a 3+ Invulnerable save while locked in combat.

Reaper of Souls: A model with this option may choose to sacrifice its normal attacks in close combat to make a number of attacks equal to the number of models in any one unit it is locked in combat with. These attacks are resolved at half (rounding down) its current Strength, AP 2.

Breaker of Titans: A model with this option may choose to sacrifice its normal attacks in close combat to make a number of attacks that are equal to half (rounding down) of its current Attacks score, but at Str D, AP 1.

Font of the Warp: A model with this option gains the Psyker special rule, Mastery Level 4 and may generate Psychic Powers from any discipline in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook* except Sanctic or Malefic Daemonology. In addition, the controlling player does not add this model's Mastery Level to the total of Warp Charges generated for a given Psychic phase, but instead adds this model's current remaining Wounds.

Wound in Reality: A model with this option that loses its last Wound explodes as though it had the Catastrophic Damage special rule (see page 90 of the *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*) and had lost its final Hull point.

Beyond Death: A model with this option that loses its last Wound is not immediately removed from play. Instead, the controlling player rolls a D6. On a 4+, the model is instead placed into Ongoing Reserves with D6 Wounds remaining. On a 3 or less, it is removed from play as a casualty. This effect may only be triggered once per model in any game.

Torrent of Unreality: A model with this option may attack during the Shooting phase using the following profile:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Torrent of Unreality	Hellstorm	6	4	Assault 1, Soul Blaze

Warp Burst: A model with this option may attack during the Shooting phase using the following profile:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Warp Burst	24"	8	4	Assault 1, Massive Blast (7")

Rend Time and Space: A model with this option may, at the end of any of their own player turns, place an additional Warp Rift marker anywhere within 2" of the model's base. This new Warp Rift marker may not be placed in dangerous terrain or difficult terrain, and may not be within 6" of another Warp Rift marker or Objective marker. This special rule may only be used once per game and may not be used while the Arch-Daemon is locked in combat.

Warp-forged Plate: A model which has this option gains a 2+ Armour Save.

Daemonology

Using Daemonology in games of The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness
The Daemons of the Ruinstorm army list adds Daemons and their servants to the ranks of those factions vying to control the destiny of the Imperium, and as such forces some changes to the Malefic Daemonology psychic discipline. The altered version of that discipline presented here should be used instead of that presented in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*.

When models from the Daemons of the Ruinstorm army list are summoned using Malefic Daemonology powers, they lose the Daemon of the Ruinstorm, Tides of Madness and Parting the Veil special rules and instead have the Daemon and Fearless special rules. Daemon units summoned using a Malefic Daemonology power may choose a single Emanations of Horror, but no other options, this Emanation of Horror must be declared when the unit is deployed into the game. Summoned Daemons do not benefit from an Aetheric Dominion taken by any Detachment in a friendly army and may not select one for themselves.

Summoned Daemons are counted as having the same Allegiance as the model which manifested the Conjuring power that causes them to enter play. In some instances this may result in Daemon units with the Loyalist Allegiance, an example of the tools of the enemy being used against him or the wanton destruction caused by the Traitors working against their overall plans for conquest.

Designer's Note: The Evolution of Hell
This update is intended to bring summoned Daemons in line with the new rules for Ruinstorm Daemons, though it should be noted that summoned Daemons are intentionally less powerful than their unbound kin. In terms of the narrative of the Horus Heresy, this helps to reinforce the idea that Daemons are still a great unknown, undefined and strange to the warriors of the Imperium, as opposed to the more clearly defined and understood menace they represent in later millennia.

Daemonology in the Age of Darkness
That tenuous science and dangerous art known as Daemonology has long been held within the domains of Mankind as a great sin, both for the madness that often befalls its practitioners as well as the destruction its practise causes. The great Emperor of Mankind first made a lie of the existence of such creatures and then took steps to root out and destroy their remaining followers, yet even such a scholar as He could not fully destroy the art.

Key to the arts of the Daemonologist is the twin act of summoning and binding Daemonic entities, an act fraught with danger where even a single mistake can exact the ultimate price. Such summoned Daemons are a far cry from their unbound kin, sustained in this mortal realm by the energy of the summoning incantation and bound by the restrictions of the summoner's wards. They are short-lived servants, limited in power and forced to mindless obedience, but deadly nonetheless.

PRIMARIS POWER

Summoning **Warp Charge 3**

The psyker completes a vile ritual that echoes through the Immaterium, summoning Daemons into the mortal realm.

Summoning is a **conjuration** with a range of 12" that creates one unit of 10 Ruinstorm Lesser Daemons.

1. Cursed Earth **Warp Charge 1**

The psyker becomes a conduit through which the energies of the Warp flow, tainting the very ground and sustaining the Daemons that walk upon it.

Cursed Earth is a **blessing** that targets the Psyker. Whilst the power is in effect, all models with the Daemon special rule (friend or foe) within 12" of the Psyker have a +1 bonus to their invulnerable save (normally increasing it to 4+). This is cumulative with any other modifiers to a Daemon's invulnerable save. In addition, whilst the power is in effect, friendly units with the Daemon special rule will not scatter when arriving from Deep Strike Reserve so long as the first model is placed within 12" of the Psyker.

2. Dark Flame **Warp Charge 1**

The psyker projects a dark ball of psychic flame that immolates their foes' souls as well as their bodies.

Dark Flame is a **witchfire** power with the following profile:

	Range	Str	AP	Type
Dark Flame	Template	4	5	Assault 1, Soul Blaze, Torrent

3. Infernal Gaze **Warp Charge 1**

Unholy power streams forth from the psyker's eyes, charring and melting all flesh, metal and stone caught in its path.

Infernal Gaze is a **beam** with the following profile:

	Range	Str	AP	Type
Infernal Gaze	18"	3	4	Assault 1, Armourbane, Fleshbane

4. Sacrifice **Warp Charge 1**

The psyker sacrifices one of their followers' souls to summon forth one of the Chaos gods' most trusted servants.

Sacrifice is a **conjuration** with a range of 6" that creates one unit consisting of a single Ruinstorm Daemon Chosen. If this power is successfully manifested, one friendly model within 6" of the Psyker (or the Psyker themselves) immediately suffers a single wound with no saves of any kind allowed.

5. Incursion **Warp Charge 3**

The psyker opens a portal to the Realm of Chaos through which the daemonic legions spill into the mortal plane.

Incursion is a **conjuration** with a range of 12" that creates one unit of three Ruinstorm Daemon Beasts or Ruinstorm Daemon Brutes.

6. Possession **Warp Charge 3**

The psyker sacrifices their own soul and a Greater Daemon of Chaos hungrily possesses them, bursting forth from the host's body in an explosion of psychic energy.

Possession is a **conjuration** with a range of 6" that creates one unit consisting of a single Ruinstorm Greater Daemon or Ruinstorm Daemon Shrike. If this power is successfully manifested, the Psyker is immediately removed as a casualty (if the Psyker was part of a unit with the Brotherhood of Psykers/Sorcerers special rule, remove the entire unit as casualties). If, when using this power, the Psyker fails their Psychic test, they automatically suffer Perils of the Warp.

Talons of the Emperor

Though in peace they served as the Emperor's 'Hands', the Talons of the Emperor is the name given to those elite forces of the Imperium who drew their commands directly from the Master of Mankind in war, and served Him as emissaries, agents, bodyguards and destroyers. They include among their number the legendary Legio Custodes, the Emperor's own sworn protectors, and the feared Sisters of Silence, harvesters of the Great Tithe, as well as the shadowy inhuman killers of the Officio Assassinorum, and other even stranger and more occluded agencies such as the tech-arcanists of the Templi-Chronos and the dread Psi-Titans of the Ordo Sinister.

While the might of the Legiones Astartes led the conquest of the galaxy with the numberless ranks of the Imperialis Auxilia following in their wake, the Talons of the Emperor were given other, often more mysterious and secret tasks, but were no less vital for that. When unleashed in war, their power is unmistakable and unstoppable, their weapons and abilities born of the Emperor's reason and of ancient relics of the Dark Age of Technology which none save they are entrusted to wield.

Legio Custodes Custodian

Custodian-Guardian Diolos Akrodius, The Vanek-Aeterna Sodality, Chamber of the Dankanatoi

Pictured here is Diolos Remulak Akrodius of the Legio Custodes, once a member of the Ephoroi. Akrodius was part of a sodality which was sundered during the Signus Campaign, his brothers-in-arms meeting their deaths at the hands of the vilest Daemons of the Warp during the heroic defence of the Red Tear. After the fateful events that took place at Signus, the wounded Custodian was kept ignorant of Imperium Secundus, remaining aboard the *Red Tear* with the other wounded among his kin while the Blood Angels lingered in the realm of Ultramar. When their force would eventually return to Terra, the recovered Akrodius would learn of the depth of disloyalty involved in the Horus Heresy and vow, alongside many of his peers, not to rest until every last hint of treachery was expunged from the Imperium.

Akrodius would go on to become one of the first representatives of a newly founded chamber of the Legio Custodes, active during the final years of the Horus Heresy, that of the Dankanatoi. Unleashed upon the last dregs of Horus' failed rebellion as they fled Terra, these warriors proved a potent weapon for the battered Loyalist host. Indeed, even in the long years of strife that followed the dark age of the Horus Heresy they remained active, hunting Traitors and xenos invaders alike long after the official end of the Scouring.

Talons of the Emperor Appendix

The Talons of the Emperor is a faction which combines a number of disparate agencies of the Imperium under the direct authority of the Emperor. For the purposes of creating a Talons of the Emperor Detachment, units from the Legio Custodes, Sisters of Silence, Officio Assassinorum and Ordo Sinister faction army lists may be used in combination, taking account of their own unique Faction special rules.

Allegiance:
Each of the individual factions of the Talons of the Emperor are considered to be Agents of the Emperor and may only be taken in an army with a Loyalist allegiance. A Talons of the Emperor Detachment may ally with any other Loyalist faction Detachment (other than Blackshields) as Fellow Warriors.

Legio Custodes Army List

Presented over the following pages are updated rules for the Legio Custodes as part of the Talons of the Emperor army list.

The warriors of the Legio Custodes are uniquely created, genetically engineered living weapons, superhuman in physical and mental prowess, and skilled in battle beyond even the warriors of the Legiones Astartes. Their martial arts are also singular and centred on individual combat, where one Custodian might slaughter dozens of lesser opponents with blinding speed and slay would-be assassins and champions with contemptuous ease.

Legio Custodes Special Rule

The Legio Custodes special rule comprises the following:

Preternatural Skill
Any model with this special rule gains a bonus of +1 to their Initiative in the Assault phase if their Weapon Skill is greater than that of the model(s) which they are fighting.

The Sodality
A unit composed entirely of models with this special rule has a unit coherency of 3" instead of the usual 2", and may always attempt to Regroup as an unmodified Leadership test regardless of casualties taken or any other effects.

Inviolable Psyche
The unit is immune to Fear and Pinning tests, and can re-roll failed Deny the Witch attempts. The unit does not suffer penalties to its Leadership when taking Morale checks.

Legio Custodes Wargear

Custodian Armour
The panoply of the Legio Custodes represents the pinnacle of the armourer's art. Far more sophisticated than production-model Legion power armour, it is fashioned with rare auramite alloy such as that used for the armour the Emperor Himself wears in battle. Each suit is unique to the Custodian Guard who wears it, and it is fitted with arrays of proximity sensors and refractor field generators to further enhance its defences.

Custodian armour provides a 2+ armour save and confers the Move Through Cover special rule.

Praesidium Shield
Ornate precursors to the later storm shields, the Praesidium shields of the Legio Custodes are forged from all but indestructible layered ceramite and resilient alloys reinforced with inbuilt field generators.

A Praesidium shield increases the invulnerable save of the bearer by 1 (e.g., a 5+ becomes a 4+), to a maximum of 3+. It also imposes a -1 penalty on To Hit rolls of opponents who direct their attacks against the model in the Assault phase, to a maximum of 6+. A model equipped with a Praesidium shield however cannot use a weapon with the Two-handed special rule, claim the benefit of an additional close combat weapon in assault or use the increased close combat profile when charging for a Guardian spear-type weapon.

'You have met them, yes, this Emperor's deadly new toys? His mutilated half-men and His soulless women, His gilded homunculi and blinded warp-speakers? Do you think them human then? Are they any less monstrous for a shape familiar to the eye? I think not. All this devilry of gene-craft and forbidden alchemy, do you think it somehow clean simply because it is worked by your self-effacing godhead-in-denial? Because your glamour-cloaked tyrant says it is so? And what ancient broken vault or bloody laboratory-prison did He — most monstrous of all— spring from? Or do you yet believe His whispered lies of immortality and pre-genesis? You would condemn me for my sins of reason and invention, but it is my eyes which see clearly you wish to blind. I damn you; I damn you all to the future hell which you already run to embrace like a lover.'

From the testimony of the technoarchaeologist Synecius Thorn

Upon his trial and condemnation to death Court of the Emperor's Assizes M30

'The rewards of tolerance are treachery and betrayal.'

Ancient Terran Proverb

Aquilon Pattern Terminator Armour

This is a variant of Terminator armour uniquely designed to operate in conjunction with the physiology of the Legio Custodes. Its origins lie with the Cataphractii suits of the Space Marine Legions, but with far greater power capacity and customised neuro-fibre uplinks, it is said, redesigned by the mind of the Emperor Himself for His elite forces.

Aquilon pattern Terminator armour provides a 2+ armour save, a 4+ invulnerable save and the Hammer of Wrath special rule. A model equipped with Aquilon pattern Terminator armour may fire Heavy and Salvo weapons, counting as stationary even if they moved in the previous Movement phase. They may also charge after firing Rapid Fire, Heavy or Salvo weapons. A model equipped with Aquilon pattern Terminator armour may not make Run moves, but may still fire Overwatch and make Sweeping Advances.

Teleportation Transponders

Although more often employed in the role of bodyguards and sentinels, when the Emperor was active during the Great Crusade, the Legio Custodes often made use of the teleportarium of their Imperial warships to swiftly gain planetfall. Such mechanisms employed for this were the most advanced of their kind and little was left to chance in their operation.

A unit comprising models that are all equipped with teleportation transponders gains the Deep Strike special rule.

Refractor Fields & Iron Halos

Although relatively rare owing to the resources and arcane lore required to construct them, a variety of personal defence energy shields are nevertheless common in the armoury of the Emperor's direct servants, serving both as a badge of office and a means of protection.

- Refractor fields confer a 5+ invulnerable save on their bearers.
- Iron halos confer a 4+ invulnerable save on their bearers.

Magisterium Vexilla

The icons and standards borne by the Legio Custodes represent the inviolable and nigh-omnipotent authority of the Emperor; a seal of ultimate sanction and the might of Mankind, and known as the Magisterium. Their mere presence on the battlefield is enough to fill those loyal with resolute zeal and wrack those who face His wrath with fear and dread. Moreover, these banners and icons are also technological artefacts containing vox relay systems and subsonic inducers, augmenting their battlefield role far beyond the merely symbolic.

A unit with a Magisterium Vexilla may re-roll failed Leadership tests and gains the Fear special rule. In addition, you may add +1 to the Wounds score calculated to see if any friendly unit with any models within 12" of any Magisterium Vexilla wins a combat in the Assault phase – this bonus only applies once.

Arae-shrikes

Ancient devices of the Dark Age of Technology which twist and distort electromagnetic signals, these counter-intelligence devices are considered blasphemous in principle and arcane function by the Mechanicum, and persist only in the hands of the Emperor's retinue. By the use of malifica-djinn and hostile blight-code, they pervert the data-readouts of unshielded cogitators and telemetry plotters with lying reports and malign falsehood, and what they cannot deceive, they simply blind and deafen with a shrieking multi-frequency cacophony.

- **Deep Strike Interference:** When an enemy unit attempts to land via Deep Strike within 12" of a model equipped with an Arae-shrike, roll a D6 before they determine the result of their Deep Strike landing. On a 4+, the unit suffers a Deep Strike Mishap instead of landing – note that even models usually immune to Deep Strike Mishaps such as those that have Inertial Guidance systems or who do not usually scatter while Deep Striking are still subject to this effect.
- **Targeting Interference:** When a unit containing one or more models with an Arae-shrike is targeted by a weapon with the Barrage type, the attacking player must roll an additional D6 for the weapon's Scatter distance and pick the highest two results. A Hit! on the Scatter dice remains a Hit! however.

Legio Custodes Telemon Heavy Dreadnought

Moritoi Ancient Debeeran Kalimakon

As one of the finest warriors of the Great Crusade, Kalimakon's legend would resound beyond the Age of Darkness. On Signus Prime his mortal frame was tragically brought to an untimely demise by the ravages of molecular-dissolution venom, injected by a Daemonic harpy in the early stages of the Battle for the Red Tear. Though even as his flesh slowly sloughed from his frame within his armour, he battled on for 18 more hours, going on to courageously pilot an Equinox Interceptor to fly alongside Sanguinius in the final assault. Thereafter, he would fight for his life in a medicae stasis chamber for several years. Upon his return to Terra, Kalimakon was granted the solemn duty of life eternal and interred within a venerated Telemon Dreadnought, and he had a role yet to play in both the Solar War and the Siege of Terra.

'Some may question your right to destroy billions. Those who understand realise you have no right to let them live.'

In Exterminatus Extremis

Legio Custodes Assault Weapons

Guardian Spear

The signature weapon of the Legio Custodes and in many ways their symbol of office is the Guardian spear. Elegant and deadly, it is a potent and unique design incorporating a power blade and a highly advanced integrated bolter weapon, and in the hands of a Custodian Guard it can strike and parry at blinding speed despite its size. More rarely, these weapons mount not bolters but advanced specialised sub-weapons such as compact meltas or even Adrathic disintegration beamers, issued against the deadliest of expected foes. The most beautifully wrought and deadly weapons of the Custodians' arsenal are the Paragon spears, storied weapons wielded by the most noted Shield Captains and Tribunes among the Ten Thousand.

All Guardian spears listed use the same profile as a close combat weapon. In addition, their abilities are boosted if the wielder has charged into combat as they are able to utilise their momentum in a lethal double-handed thrust. In addition, Legio Custodes spears also mount a different ranged weapon depending on their sub-type: Guardian spears are fitted with Guardian bolters, Pyrithite spears with melta beams, Adrasite spears with Adrathic destructors and Paragon spears with Paragon bolters.

'Only in Death does Duty End.'

First Maxim of the Legio Custodes

Guardian Spear

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Guardian spear				
- Power blade	Melee	As User/+1*	3/2*	Melee, Lightning Blows, Specialist Weapon
- Guardian bolter	18"	4	4	Assault 2
- Melta beam	6"	8	1	Assault 1, Melta
- Adrathic destructor	12"	5	2	Assault 1, Instant Death, Armourbane, Gets Hot

**Use the second profile if the model has charged this turn.*

Lightning Blows: Every roll of a 6 To Hit with this weapon generates another attack with the same weapon at the same Initiative step. These extra attacks do not themselves generate additional attacks.

Paragon Spear

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Paragon spear				
- Power blade	Melee	+1/+2*	2	Melee, Lightning Blows, Murderous Strike, Specialist Weapon
- Paragon bolter	18"	5	3	Assault 2

**Use the second profile if the model has charged this turn.*

Lightning Blows: Every roll of a 6 To Hit with this weapon generates another attack with the same weapon at the same Initiative step. These extra attacks do not themselves generate additional attacks.

Murderous Strike: Attacks with this special rule cause Instant Death on a To Wound roll of 6. Roll any viable saves against these Instant Death-causing wounds separately to any other wounds the attack inflicts.

Sentinel Warblade

This is another unique weapon of the Legio Custodes, brutal where the Guardian spear is precise. The hyper-pulse disruption field generators found in the warblade are able to tear apart flesh and metal on contact, while inbuilt into the blade is a double-barrelled bolt caster able to lay down a hail of fire at short range.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Sentinel warblade				
- Warblade	Melee	As User	3	Melee, Rending, Specialist Weapon
- Bolt caster	12"	4	5	Assault 2, Hail of Fire

Hail of Fire: This weapon makes Snap Shots at BS 2.

Solerite Power Gauntlets & Power Talons

First fashioned in the pattern of ancient relics to arm the elite of the Thunder Warriors, the Solerite power gauntlets and their raptor-taloned variants are potent weapons. They differ from the standard power fists and claws utilised by the Legiones Astartes in both the near-irreplaceable artefact power coils which energise their disruption field generators and the nigh-indestructible materials their casings and blades are fashioned from, forged as they are in furnaces recovered from the ancient Tempest galleries near Terra's molten core.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Solerite power gauntlet	-	x2	1	Melee, Master-crafted, Unwieldy
Solerite power talons	-	+2	3	Melee, Shred, Master-crafted

'There are no bystanders in the war of life and death, no place the battle cannot reach; so fight it without remorse or relenting, for death will surely do the same.'

Attributed to Constantin Valdor

Legio Custodes Ranged Weapons

Adrathic Weapons

Relics of the Dark Age of Technology believed to be all but unique to Terra, Adrathic weaponry uses a potent but dangerously unstable energy beam to sever the internal bonds of matter, causing objects caught in their path to unravel in a spectacularly destructive manner, leaving only a flaring after-image of what was. Such weapons were legend during the Age of Strife, and devastating wars were fought on anarchic Old Terra solely over the possession of some unearthed cache of Adrathic guns and the promise of the power they held. When the Emperor came to dominion and ended Old Night on Ancient Terra, all Adrathic weapons were given over to Him on pain of death, not simply to the one who retained them but to their entire land and nation such was the importance He placed on controlling this technology. These weapons have remained in His care ever since, and only His own personal weaponsmiths gained and kept the knowledge of how to replicate them in small numbers, much to the jealousy of Mars.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Adrathic destructor	12"	5	2	Assault 1, Instant Death, Armourbane, Gets Hot
Adrathic devastator	18"	6	2	Heavy 2, Instant Death, Armourbane, Gets Hot
Adrathic exterminator	36"	6	2	Heavy 1, Blast (3"), Instant Death, Armourbane, Gets Hot

Adrastus Bolt Caliver

Developed as a hybrid of later pattern Imperium bolt weapon designs and Dark Age of Technology 'Adrastite' disintegration beam weapons prohibited from general Great Crusade issue, the Adrastus bolt caliver is a potent shoulder arm serving as a portable heavy weapon for the Legio Custodes. This combination weapon is able to unleash a fusillade of explosive rounds at long range with the potency of the heavy bolters carried by the Legiones Astartes, or at shorter ranges fire a disintegration beam able to rip a target apart at a molecular level, causing its victims to cease to exist in a howling flare of energy.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Adrastus bolt caliver				
- Bolt volley	30"	5	4	Assault 3
- Disintegration beam	12"	5	2	Assault 1, Instant Death, Armourbane, Gets Hot

Combination Weapon: A model with an Adrastus bolt caliver can fire it either as a volley of bolter fire or a disintegration beam in the Shooting phase – you must declare which is used before any dice are rolled. If a unit is equipped with this weapon then the controlling player must decide and declare which mode is being used by each model, and the unit does not have to entirely fire on the same mode. Note that unlike conventional combi-weapons, the disintegration beam can be fired multiple times during the game.

Lastrum Storm Bolter and Bolt Cannon

This pattern of bolt weapons is named for the weaponsmiths of the Lastrum Core Clan of the Appolyne workshops of Terra. Other than being exemplars of their kind in terms of skill of fabrication, they would not be remarkable save for their uniquely powerful ammunition. Rather than the usual 'kraken' type bolts utilised by the wider sweep of the Legio Custodes, the artisans of the Lastrum clans hand manufacture only customised mass-reactive heliothermic warheads for their bolt shells. Once within their target, these burst into brief, but sun-hot incendiary detonations, incinerating their victims from within. These shells are uncommonly dense, requiring a far stronger charge to launch than common bolt shells, and only the Lastrum's uniquely sturdy construction for a weapon of their size can withstand the stresses of their repeated firing.

The sheer resources and artifice of these weapons are immense, and they could never hope to be mass produced to arm the Legiones Astartes, and even the output of entire generations of the Lastrum themselves can barely satisfy Legio Custodes' demands.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Lastrum storm bolter	24"	5	4	Assault 2, Heliothermic Detonation
Lastrum bolt cannon	36"	6	3	Heavy 3, Heliothermic Detonation

Heliothermic Detonation: If any target suffers one or more unsaved wounds from this weapon and is not slain, they must take an immediate Toughness test. If this test is failed, they suffer Instant Death. In the case of a vehicle suffering a penetrating hit from this weapon, add +1 to the result that is rolled on the Vehicle Damage table.

Legio Custodes Battlefield Support Weapons

As with much of their personal armoury, the weaponry of the Legio Custodes' unique war machines is an expression of the height of the Imperium's technological capacities. Many can be described as paragon variants of well-established Imperial patterns such as the Arachnus blaze cannon, which were recognisably developments of widely used Imperial las technology, but built with esoteric and powerful components which could never be replicated en masse. Others, such as the Iliastus accelerator cannon, were however at the cutting edge of new military developments, incorporating technologies gleaned and tested on the frontline of the Great Crusade.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Iliastus accelerator cannon	60"	7	2	Heavy 3, Rending, Rapid Tracking, Heliothermic Detonation
Infernus incinerator	Template	6	4	Heavy 1
Infernus firepike	Template	6	6	Heavy 1, Torrent
Proteus las lance	24"	7	2	Heavy 2, Lance
Corve las-pulser	36"	9	2	Heavy D3
Arachnus blaze cannon				
- Concentrated blast	48"	8	1	Heavy 1, Exoshock
- Burst fire	36"	6	5	Heavy 3
Arachnus heavy blaze cannon				
- Concentrated blast	72"	10	1	Heavy 1, Exoshock
- Burst fire	48"	8	3	Heavy 4

Rapid Tracking: Targets may not take Jink saves against damage from this weapon.

Exoshock: If this weapon successfully scores a penetrating hit on a target, roll a D6. On the roll of a 4+, a second automatic penetrating hit is inflicted on the same target, against which cover saves may not be taken.

Heliothermic Detonation: If any target suffers one or more unsaved wounds from this weapon and is not slain, they must take an immediate Toughness test. If this test is failed, they suffer Instant Death. If a vehicle suffers a penetrating hit from this weapon, add +1 to the result rolled on the Vehicle Damage table.

'Victory lies not in iron, but in mettle.'

Samerik Gun Clan Axiom

Legio Custodes Shield Captain

190 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Shield Captain	6	5	5	5	4	6	5	10	2+

HQ

Within the Legio Custodes, there exists a range of ranks and seniority of commands, far from transparent to outsiders, to which the more general appellation of Shield Captain is applied, though within the Legio such ranks range from Prefect to Lictor, Proconsul to Tribune, following the ancient patterns of Terra's lost history. Elevated both through the trust held among their peers for their judgement and skill, but first and foremost advanced by the direct approval and in some cases intervention of the Emperor Himself, these are warriors not only of consummate and superhuman ability, but also rare insight, acumen and knowledge.

Afforded the rarest and finest of the Imperium's arms, each of these legendary fighters commanded the Legio Custodes against all manner of threats against the Emperor, His works and His domains, and whether their command concerned a dozen of their brethren detached to stand beside one of the Space Marine Legions in battle, or a thousand strong company paved the way for the Emperor to walk upon some world of the dark frontier, they bore with them the might and power of their Legio manifested in a single indomitable warrior.

Unit Composition
- 1 Shield Captain

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Guardian spear
- Close combat weapon
- Iron halo
- Plasma & krak grenades
- Custodian armour

Special Rules
- Legio Custodes
- Bulky
- Crusader
- Counter-attack
- Precision Strikes
- Precision Shots
- Independent Character

Options
- The Shield Captain may be equipped with any of the following:
  - Melta bombs ..... +5 points
  - Arae-shrikes ..... +10 points
  - Teleportation transponder ..... +10 points
  - Archaeotech pistol ..... +10 points
  - Praesidium shield ..... +15 points
  - Digital lasers ..... +15 points
- The Shield Captain may replace their Guardian spear with one of the following options:
  - Sentinel warblade ..... Free
  - Solerite power gauntlet ..... +15 points
  - Solerite power talon ..... +10 points
  - A pair of Solerite power talons ..... +15 points
  - Pyrithite spear ..... +15 points
  - Adrasite spear ..... +10 points
  - Paragon spear ..... +25 points
- A single Legio Custodes Shield Captain in your army may be upgraded to a Legio Custodes Tribune for +50 points so long as the Detachment they are a part of is of 2,000 points or more.

Legio Custodes Tribune
A Legio Custodes Tribune retains all the rules and options listed previously, but gains the Fearless and Eternal Warrior special rules. In addition, you may select rather than randomly determine a Warlord Trait for them. If present in your Primary Detachment, a Legio Custodes Tribune must be your Warlord unless Constantin Valdor, Jenetia Krole or the Emperor of Mankind is also present.

Constantin Valdor

325 points

Captain-General of the Legio Custodes, The Shield of the Emperor, The First of the Ten Thousand

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Constantin Valdor	7	5	5	5	5	6	5	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 1 (Unique)

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- The Apollonian spear
- Iron halo
- Plasma & krak grenades
- Arae-shrike
- Digital lasers*
- Custodian armour

**Note that the additional close combat attack is already included in Constantin Valdor's profile.*

Special Rules
- Legio Custodes
- Fearless
- Bulky
- Crusader
- Counter-attack
- Precision Strikes
- Precision Shots
- Eternal Warrior
- Independent Character
- Warlord Trait (if Constantin Valdor is the army's Warlord, he has the Shadow of the Throne trait rather than rolling randomly)

The Apollonian Spear
Believed to be crafted by the hand of the Emperor Himself and once wielded by His own hand in battle as far back as the Unification Wars in which He rose to power on Terra, the Apollonian Spear was given to Valdor upon his accession to the mantle of Chief Custodian, and it has served no other since. Like the signature armament of the Custodian Guard, it incorporates both a power blade and inbuilt bolter weapon, though in both cases these are of a potency far exceeding those even the Emperor's elite carry into battle.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Power blade	Melee	+1/+2*	2	Melee, Lightning Blows, Molecular Severance, Specialist Weapon
Hyper-velocity bolter	18"	5	2	Assault 2, Concussive

**Use the second profile if the model has charged this turn.*

Lightning Blows: Every roll of a 6 To Hit with this weapon generates another attack with the same weapon at the same Initiative step. These extra attacks do not themselves generate further attacks.

Molecular Severance: Any To Wound roll of a 4+ with this weapon inflicts Instant Death, or in the case of a vehicle causes a penetrating hit regardless of the target's Armour Value. In addition, any successful invulnerable save made against wounds from this weapon must be re-rolled.

Warlord: The Shadow of the Throne
Constantin Valdor carries with him the authority of Terra itself, and there is little by way of resource or technology that is available to the vast Imperium of humanity he cannot requisition or command if he wills it.

If Constantin Valdor is your Warlord, he may re-roll attempts to Seize the Initiative in missions where this is a factor. Additionally, if Constantin Valdor is your Warlord, he gains the Teleportation Transponders item of wargear and may also grant one unit with the Legio Custodes special rule Teleportation Transponders at no additional cost.

HQ

Constantin Valdor sits at the right hand of the Emperor as perhaps His most trusted companion and guardian, a watchman of inviolable purpose and all but unmatched fighting skill. Such in fact is Valdor's martial power and superhuman physical and mental abilities that there are those, even within the Imperial Court, who have in whispers called him 'Primarch' in all but name. This is no doubt a disingenuous claim, as for all his power Valdor was made and trained to serve a different and far more focused purpose, that of Lord Commander of the Custodian Guard, and to Valdor the petty concerns of conquest and glory, dominion and victory are as nothing when compared to his own sworn duty.

So while Constantin Valdor holds a rank in some ways higher than that even of a Primarch, and sits at the centre of Imperial power on Terra, he seldom exercises his influence, save where his purview is directly concerned, and then never with ambition or aggrandisement. But should his purpose be challenged or worse yet should anyone or anything seek to endanger the Emperor or His chosen representatives, Valdor is as a demigod of vengeance made incarnate: unstoppable and unrelenting.

ELITES

An inner circle within the Legio Custodes, the Hetaeron Guard serve as the Emperor's closest protectors, aides and confidantes, leaving His side rarely but for the direst of circumstances. Selected individually for their service by the Master of Mankind, they represent some of the most potent fighters in the Imperium, almost like demigods of the battlefield.

During the earlier years of the Great Crusade in which the Emperor Himself personally directed the reclamation of lost worlds, the Hetaeron were a regular feature upon the worlds deserving of His attention. Yet as His actions were turned elsewhere, His inner guard would follow too, becoming almost a myth in their absence.

Legio Custodes Hetaeron Guard Squad

250 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Hetaeron Guard	5	5	5	5	3	5	3	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 3 Hetaeron Guard

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Guardian spear
- Custodian armour
- Refractor field
- Plasma & krak grenades

Special Rules
- Legio Custodes
- Bulky
- Crusader
- Counter-attack

Dedicated Transport
- A Coronus Grav-carrier may be chosen as a Dedicated Transport for a Hetaeron Guard Squad if they number six models or less.

Options
- The Hetaeron Guard Squad may include:
  - Up to 7 additional Hetaeron Guard ..... +70 points each
- The entire Hetaeron Guard Squad may be equipped with any of the following options:
  - Melta bombs ..... +5 points each
  - Teleportation transponders ..... +5 points each
  - Arae-shrikes ..... +15 points each
- Any member of the Hetaeron Guard Squad may replace their Guardian spear with one of the following options:
  - Sentinel warblade ..... Free
  - Solerite power gauntlet ..... +15 points per model
  - Solerite power talon ..... +10 points per model
  - Pyrithite spear ..... +15 points per model
  - Adrasite spear ..... +10 points per model
  - Paragon blade ..... +25 points per model
- One member of the Hetaeron Guard Squad may exchange their Guardian spear for one of the following options:
  - Magisterium vexilla & a master-crafted power weapon ..... +15 points
  - Magisterium vexilla & Sentinel warblade ..... +20 points
- Any member of the Hetaeron Guard Squad not equipped with a Magisterium vexilla may be equipped with a:
  - Praesidium shield ..... +10 points each

Legio Custodes Aquilon Terminator Squad

255 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Aquilon Terminator	5	5	5	5	3	5	3	9	2+

Unit Composition
- 3 Aquilon Terminators

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Lastrum storm bolter
- Solerite power gauntlet
- Aquilon Terminator armour

Special Rules
- Legio Custodes
- Bulky
- Crusader

Dedicated Transport
- A Coronus Grav-carrier may be chosen as a Dedicated Transport for an Aquilon Terminator Squad if they number six models or less.

Options
- The Aquilon Terminator Guard Squad may include:
  - Up to 7 additional Aquilon Terminators.....+75 points each
- Any model may exchange their Solerite power gauntlet for a:
  - Solerite power talon..... Free
- Any model may exchange their Lastrum pattern storm bolter for one of the following options:
  - Twin-linked Adrathic destructor.....+15 points each
  - Infernus firepike.....+15 points each
- The entire squad may be equipped with any of the following options:
  - Teleportation transponders.....+5 points each
  - Arae-shrikes.....+15 points

ELITES

Although the Tactical Dreadnought Armour project was conceived first and foremost for the use of the Legiones Astartes, it was inevitable given the success of Terminator armour that its principles would also be adapted for Legio Custodes use. The first pattern developed was what became known as Aquilon armour. Advancing yet further upon the Cataphractii Terminator armour patterns, the Aquilon pattern takes into account the enhanced physique of the Legio Custodes as being able to bear more weight and strain than even a Space Marine, and so is fitted with additional integrated power systems and capacitors which make up for some of the limitations of the origin-pattern. This allows for the Cataphractii Terminator armour's famous durability to be retained in the Aquilon pattern, but with a degree of speed and manoeuvrability the former lacks.

Within the ranks of the Legio Custodes, Aquilon Terminator Sodalities were employed rarely but as need dictated, particularly on those rare occasions where the Legio Custodes were required to operate under conditions designated as 'Zone Mortalis' or deployed to storm a breach. In such operations, the Legio was loathe to risk unwarranted loss of life, and the superior defences of the Aquilon Terminator armour was relied upon to mitigate the risk as much as possible as well as provide a platform of mobile heavy firepower.

There is little short of utter destructive force able to fell a Custodes, and thanks to their Emperor-gifted preternatural resilience, there are few injuries that they cannot fully recover from given time. However, in those isolated cases where the body has been all but irrevocably destroyed but the Custodian's mind remains intact and their will to survive undimmed, interment within the cold and unyielding body of a Dreadnought is the next step, as for the Custodes, truly only in death does duty end.

To this purpose, the few Dreadnoughts of the Legio Custodes are as singularly advanced as their other wargear, with unique variants of more common patterns available to the Legiones Astartes refitted to the particular physiology of the Custodians themselves, and outfitted with weapons and systems artificer-made by the servants of the Imperial Court.

At the time of the outbreak of the Horus Heresy, the most widely employed was the Contemptor-Achillus, a general battle unit which combined phenomenal strength and speed with the echoes of the interned Custodes' own unmatched martial skill.

Legio Custodes Contemptor-Achillus Dreadnought — 215 points

				Armour					
	WS	BS	S	Front	Side	Rear	I	A	HP
Achillus Dreadnought	6	5	8	13	13	11	5	4	3

Unit Composition
- 1 Contemptor-Achillus Dreadnought

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Walker)

Wargear
- Two Dreadnought close combat weapons with inbuilt Lastrum storm bolters*
- Smoke launchers
- Searchlight
- Refractor field
- Extra armour

**Note that the bonus close combat attack is already included in the Achillus Dreadnought's profile.*

Special Rules
- Fleet
- Move Through Cover
- Counter-attack

Options
- An Achillus Dreadnought may be equipped with an:
  - Achillus dreadspear with in-built Corvae las-pulser.....+60 points
- An Achillus Dreadnought may replace any of its Lastrum storm bolters with one of the following:
  - Twin-linked Adrathic destructor.....+15 points each
  - Single Infernus incinerator.....+5 points each

Contemptor-Achillus Dreadspear
In addition to their standard armament, such is the dexterity and power of the Achillus pattern Dreadnoughts of the Legio Custodes that they are able to wield scaled-up versions of the iconic spear of their Legio with devastating power.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Achillus dreadspear	Melee	10	2	Melee, Impaling, Master-crafted

Impaling: In the Assault phase on a turn in which this model has charged, To Hit rolls of 6 with this weapon are resolved as Destroyer Hits.

Legio Custodes Custodian Guard Squad

165 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Custodian Guard	5	5	5	5	2	5	2	9	2+

Unit Composition
- 3 Custodian Guard

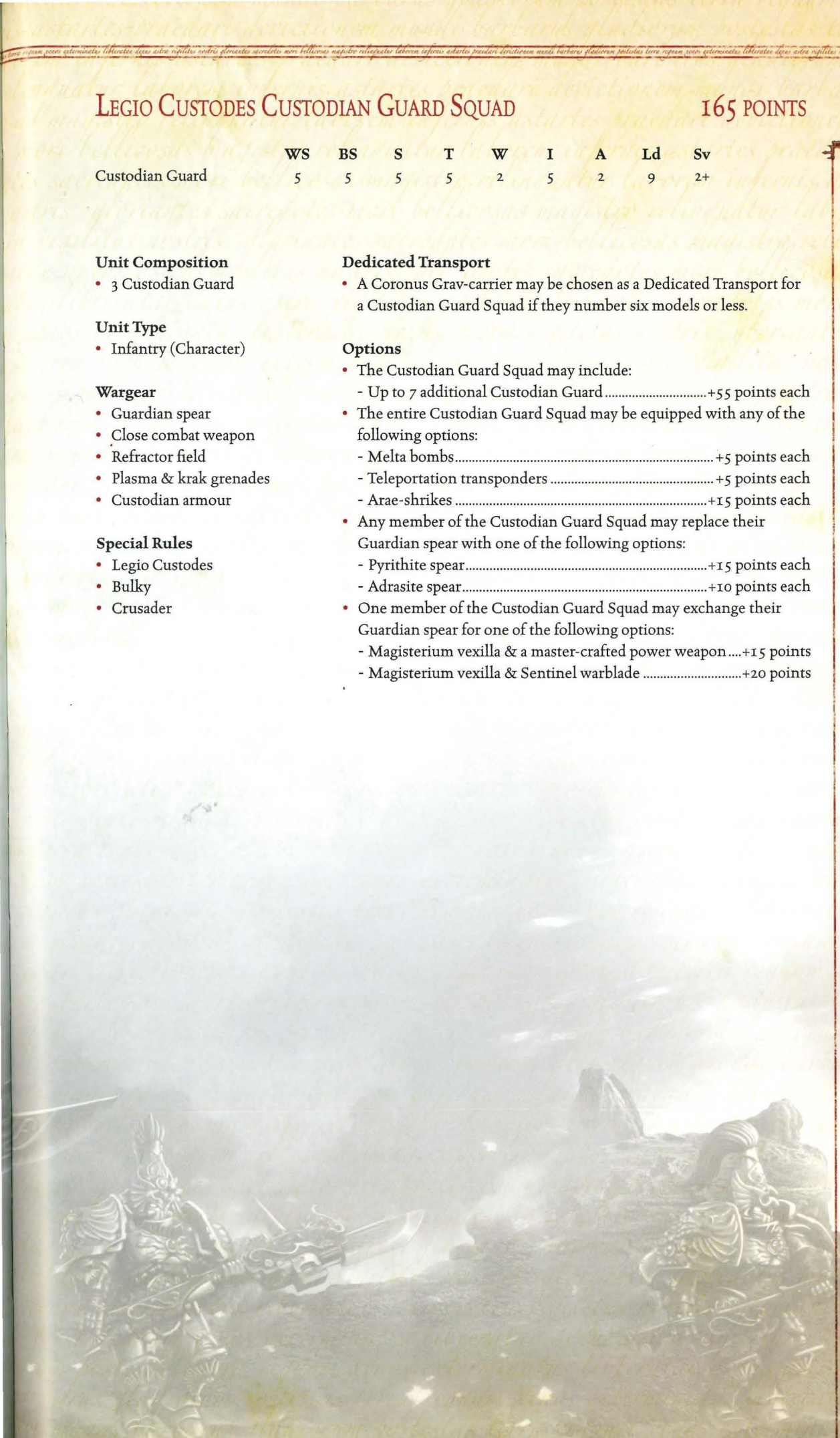
Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Guardian spear
- Close combat weapon
- Refractor field
- Plasma & krak grenades
- Custodian armour

Special Rules
- Legio Custodes
- Bulky
- Crusader

Dedicated Transport
- A Coronus Grav-carrier may be chosen as a Dedicated Transport for a Custodian Guard Squad if they number six models or less.

Options
- The Custodian Guard Squad may include:
  - Up to 7 additional Custodian Guard ..... +55 points each
- The entire Custodian Guard Squad may be equipped with any of the following options:
  - Melta bombs ..... +5 points each
  - Teleportation transponders ..... +5 points each
  - Arae-shrikes ..... +15 points each
- Any member of the Custodian Guard Squad may replace their Guardian spear with one of the following options:
  - Pyrithite spear ..... +15 points each
  - Adrasite spear ..... +10 points each
- One member of the Custodian Guard Squad may exchange their Guardian spear for one of the following options:
  - Magisterium vexilla & a master-crafted power weapon ..... +15 points
  - Magisterium vexilla & Sentinel warblade ..... +20 points



TROOPS

The Custodian Guard serve as the mainstay of the Legio Custodes, their panoply of arms symbolic both of their authority and of the Legio Custodes itself. Stronger, faster and more resilient than even the superhuman warriors of the Legiones Astartes, the Emperor-wrought Custodian Guard are terrifyingly potent warriors, and the uniquely alloyed artificer armour they wear and the tactical flexibility of the lethal Guardian spear they carry all amplify these attributes to make them fighters unrivalled within the forces of the Imperium and arguably the galaxy.

Both in their duty of guardianship and in situations in which the supervision of the Legio Custodes is required to ensure an end is met or artefact retrieved, the Custodian Guard are the first to be deployed in service, and across its history, the majority of the Kykanatoi which made up the Legio Custodes ranks fought in this manner.

Legio Custodes Sentinel Guard Squad

180 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Sentinel Guard	5	5	5	5	2	5	2	9	2+

Unit Composition
- 3 Sentinel Guard

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Sentinel warblade
- Close combat weapon
- Refractor field
- Praesidium shield
- Plasma & krak grenades
- Custodian armour

Special Rules
- Legio Custodes
- Bulky
- Crusader
- Shield Barricade

Dedicated Transport
- A Coronus Grav-carrier may be chosen as a Dedicated Transport for a Sentinel Guard Squad if they number six models or less.

Options
- The Sentinel Guard Squad may include:
  - Up to 7 additional Sentinel Guard ..... +65 points each
- The entire Sentinel Guard Squad may be equipped with any of the following options:
  - Melta bombs ..... +5 points each
  - Teleportation transponders ..... +5 points each
  - Arae-shrikes ..... +15 points each
- Any member of the Sentinel Guard Squad may replace their Sentinel warblade with a:
  - Solerite power talon ..... +10 points each
  - Solerite power gauntlet ..... +15 points each
- One member of the Sentinel Guard Squad may exchange their Praesidium shield for a:
  - Magisterium vexilla ..... +10 points

Shield Barricade
Friendly Infantry units being targeted by ranged attacks which pass through the area occupied by a unit composed entirely of models with this special rule gain a 4+ cover save.

TROOPS

Sentinel Guard squads are the defensive formation of the Legio Custodes, designed to function as a mobile bulwark to protect emissaries on hazardous ground and hold defensive lines against the most grievous onslaught in open battle. In order to achieve this, they are equipped with energy field-reinforced Praesidium shields —a precursor technology to that later employed by the prototype Legiones Astartes storm shields— which are able to resist the heaviest weapons fire.

When deployed outside the walls of the Imperial Palace, their charge is often to protect key aspects of allied detachments and resources liberated from the enemy. However, it has been witnessed during large scale sudden assaults that their close formations also served to disrupt enemy lines. While they still retain the loose unit structures of the Legio Custodes, the Sentinel Guard by their nature utilise a greater synchronicity between warriors in service to the various phalanx formations that could be required of the squad at any given moment.

Legio Custodes Coronus Grav-carrier

175 points

	Armour				
	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Coronus Grav-carrier	5	13	12	11	4

Unit Composition
- 1 Coronus Grav-carrier

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Skimmer, Fast)

Wargear
- Twin-linked Lastrum bolt cannon
- Turret-mounted twin-linked Arachnus blaze cannon
- Flare shield
- Machine spirit
- Searchlight

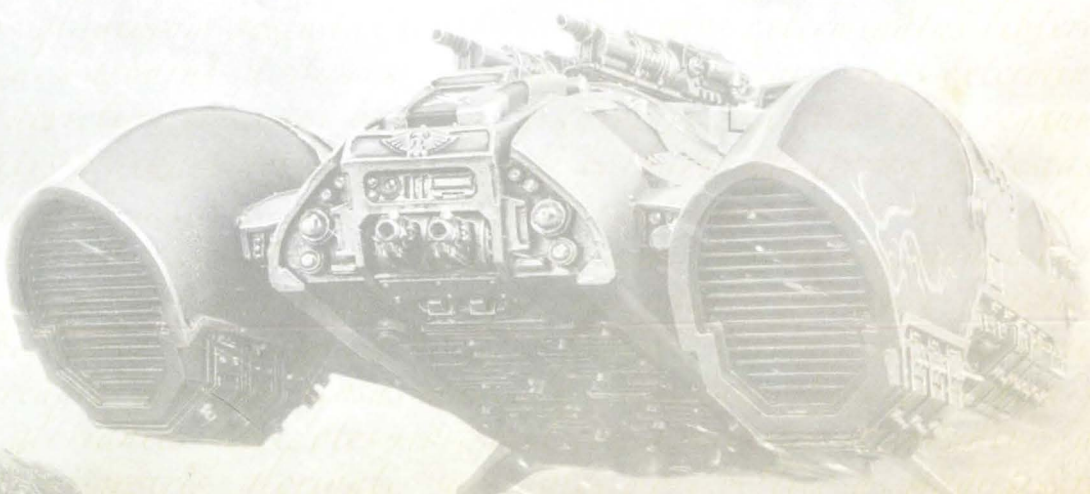
Special Rules
- Deep Strike
- Outflank
- Grav-backwash

Access Points
- The Coronus Grav-carrier has one access point at the rear of the vehicle.

Transport Capacity
- The Coronus Grav-carrier has a Transport capacity of 12 models.

Options
- A Coronus Grav-carrier may take any of the following upgrades:
  - Armoured ceramite ..... +20 points
  - Extra armour ..... +5 points

Grav-backwash
Unless the vehicle has become Immobilised, attackers suffer -2 To Hit the vehicle in assault.



Dedicated Transport

The Coronus Grav-carrier is perhaps one of the most well-known of the vehicles used exclusively by the Legio Custodes. It was already under wide utilisation across the Legio in the closing decades of the Great Crusade, replacing the limited numbers of the relic Jocasta pattern grav-craft that had survived the Unification Wars on Ancient Terra. The use of heavily protected grav-craft by the Legio Custodes granted their forces a degree of speed and agility that could not be matched by the grinding armour of other military bodies of the Imperium, allowing them to deploy, redeploy and evade without the danger of being easily pinned down by enemy troops or hazardous terrain.

The Coronus pattern also served as the inspiration and technological basis for the Pallas and the Caladius Grav-craft, developed to meet the specific strategic needs of rapid attack and line of battle tank respectively.

Legio Custodes Agamatus Jetbike Squadron

225 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Custodian Agamatus	5	5	5	6	2	5	2	9	2+

Unit Composition
- 3 Custodian Agamatus

Unit Type
- Jetbike (Character)

Wargear
- Power lance
- Plasma & krak grenades
- Legio Custodes Gyrfalcon Jetbike with a Lastrum bolt cannon
- Custodian armour
- Refractor field

Special Rules
- Legio Custodes
- Deep Strike
- Split Fire

Options
- The Legio Custodes Agamatus Jetbike Squadron may include:
  - Up to three additional Custodian Agamatus ..... +75 points each
- The entire squad may be given melta bombs ..... +5 points each
- Any Custodian Agamatus may replace its Lastrum bolt cannon with one of the following options:
  - Adrathic devastator ..... +15 points each
  - Twin-linked Corvae las-pulser ..... +35 points each

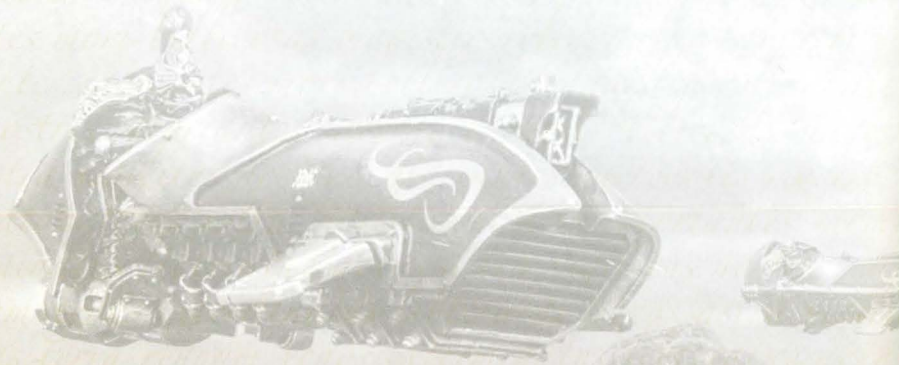
Legio Custodes Gyrfalcon Pattern Jetbike
More powerful even than the Scimitar pattern associated with the Legiones Astartes, the Gyrfalcon is a heavy design akin more to an armoured one-man speeder than a true jetbike. In addition, it augments its grav-repellor systems with a plasma-thrust motor for huge temporary bursts of speed.

The Legio Custodes Gyrfalcon pattern Jetbike operates under the standard rules for Jetbikes found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness Rulebook*. In addition, it increases the rider's Toughness by +1 (this bonus has already been included in the profile shown above) and failed Charge distances may be re-rolled when using the Jetbike.

FAST ATTACK

One of a number of customised grav-skimmer and jetbike designs utilised by the Legio Custodes, the Agamatus squadrons use the heavy duty, plasma motor-boosted Gyrfalcon pattern as their steeds in battle, the increased power of the design supporting not only the heavily armoured Custodian Guard, but also allowing it to mount a powerful Iliastus pattern bolt cannon as its on-board armament.

The Agamatus squadrons of the Legio Custodes exploit these war machines to operate both as a rapid response and suppression unit in the field. In this they operate much in the manner of the elite cavalry forces of ancient times, screening the main Legio Custodes force from potential encirclement, reacting quickly to blunt enemy attacks, and hunting down mercilessly any foe which breaks and flees before the might of the Legio Custodes, ensuring the utter extermination of the enemy.



Legio Custodes Pallas Grav-attack Squadron

95 points

	BS	Armour Front	Side	Rear	HP
Pallas Grav-attack	5	12	11	11	2

Unit Composition
- 1 Pallas Grav-attack

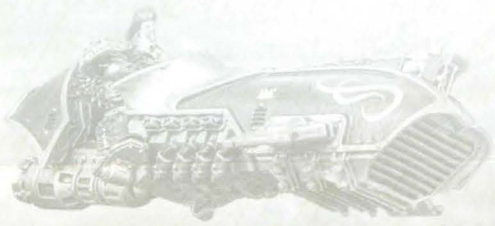
Unit Type
- Vehicle (Skimmer, Fast)

Wargear
- Twin-linked Arachnus blaze cannon
- Flare shield
- Machine spirit
- Searchlight

Special Rules
- Deep Strike
- Outflank
- Grav-backwash

Options
- The Pallas Grav-attack Squadron may include:
  - Up to two additional Pallas Grav-attack vehicles.....+95 points each
- A Pallas Grav-attack may take any of the following upgrades:
  - Extra armour.....+5 points
- Any Pallas Grav-attack may exchange its twin-linked Arachnus blaze cannon for a:
  - Twin-linked Adrathic devastator.....+20 points each

Grav-backwash
Unless the vehicle has become Immobilised, attackers suffer -2 To Hit the vehicle in assault.



FAST ATTACK

Designed as a high manoeuvrability hunter-killer, the Pallas pattern Grav-attack squadrons provided the Legio Custodes with a rapid strike capacity greater than that which could be afforded by the use of ground troops alone. Based upon the advanced repulsor-lift technology pioneered by the Coronus, the Pallas' battlefield role came to resemble more that of the usage of the Land Speeder among the Legiones Astartes, relying increasingly on its superior agility to inflict devastating hit-and-run assaults on the enemy or to hunt down fleeing targets. In addition, its abilities allowed the Pallas Grav-attack squadrons to also be used as reconnaissance units or as skirmishing forces large enough to pin or delay the enemy in place as the main bulk of the Legio Custodes detachment was deployed.

Despite its smaller size, the Pallas is surprisingly durable and mounts a very flexible armament configuration, primarily comprising highly adaptable Arachnus blaze cannon, enabling it to successfully engage both infantry and armoured targets. Rarer variants do however exist, including those equipped with extremely powerful Adrathic disintegration beam weapons.

Legio Custodes Custodian Venatari Squad

210 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Custodian Venatari	5	5	5	5	2	5	2	9	3+

Unit Composition
- 3 Custodian Venatari

Unit Type
- Jump Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Custodian jump harness
- Tarsus buckler and archaeotech kinetic destroyer
- Plasma & krak grenades
- Refractor field

Special Rules
- Legio Custodes
- Crusader
- Bulky
- Move Through Cover
- Fleet
- Auramite Pinions

Options
- The squad may include:
  - Up to 7 additional Custodian Venatari .....+65 points each
- Any Custodian Venatari may replace their Tarsus buckler and Archaeotech kinetic destroyer for a:
  - Venatari lance.....+10 points each
- The entire Custodian Venatari Squad may be equipped with:
  - Melta bombs.....+5 points each

FAST ATTACK

Vaunted as a high honour among the Legio Custodes, the role of Custodian Venatari is reserved for a scant few. Among their ranks are those who have proven themselves both through successes in the Blood Games, the competitive exercise run by the Custodes to test the vulnerabilities in the Emperor's personal defences, and those with proven skill with the rare and much sought after sophisticated flight system and archaeotech weapons they wield.

The Venatari are specialists in hunting direct threats to the Emperor amidst the sprawl of the Palace walls and its spire-tops. While shield companies patrol the vast hallways and cavernous rooms of the Imperial Palace, the Venatari are elevated above, making their domain among the rooftops and spires, overseeing and assessing the threat of all who enter or leave. Their predatory instincts have earned the Venatari the nickname of the Emperor's 'Hunting Eagles', standing as immobile and vigilant as the birds of prey of Old Earth atop the mountain peaks before swooping into a killing dive.

Custodian Jump Harness
A light-weight suit of vestments which interface with the Custodian's own breastplate, the jump harness consists of hand-bonded and reinforced leather armour enhanced with Auramite plating to ensure the protection of a warrior's vital organs. This harness is integrated with the sophisticated Alular jump pack, which is hand-crafted into the form of the Raptora Imperialis by master artisans in the spire-tops of the Tower of Hegemon.

The Custodian jump harness provides a 3+ armour save and the Auramite Pinions special rule.

Auramite Pinions
The wings of the Alular jump pack are incredibly responsive in flight, allowing a Custodian Venatari to soar through the air to reach their target, even under heavy fire. Once on the ground they are no less useful however; the Auramite wingspan can be swept round to deflect opportunistic attacks from the sides and rear, as well as actively used to turn the blade of an opponent in a duel.

A model with this special rule has an invulnerable save of 4+ when locked in close combat.

Archaeotech Kinetic Destroyer
This is an extremely rare weapon of ancient pedigree. Unearthed from a stasis vault within the skeletal remains of a crashed voidship deep below the sediment of what was once one of Terra's ancient oceans, the few examples of this pistol that yet exist are dated back to the earliest ages of Mankind's expansion amongst the stars. The weapon expends energy shells which release a huge amount of directed kinetic force. These are irreplaceable and though tens of thousands were found with the cache of weapons, they will one day all be gone as they cannot be re-engineered by the Imperium's weaponsmiths. Causing colossal recoil force compared to some of the other weapons wielded by the Legio Custodes, the kinetic destroyer is far more difficult to use than the guardian bolter. However, mastery over such a weapon is a badge of honour for which the Custodian Guard compete, and it has become a matter of martial pride among many shield companies to challenge one another to feats of speed and accuracy with pistols; the victor claiming the right to wield an archaeotech kinetic destroyer.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Archaeotech kinetic destroyer	12"	7	3	Pistol, Master-crafted, Fan-burst

Fan-burst: *Only a handful of archaeotech kinetic destroyers remain in existence, and of these the majority are wielded by the Custodian Venatari. Few amongst even this rarefied Order have truly mastered the powerful revolving cylinder energy weapon, but amongst those who have, with perfect trigger timing they can accelerate the firing rate of the weapon.*

On the roll of a 6 To Hit, the bearer may make an extra shooting attack with this weapon (up to a maximum of six rolls To Hit).

Tarsus Buckler
Designed to reduce the velocity of incoming projectiles and blows by dispersing kinetic energy, the Tarsus buckler projects a protective pulse of energy which oscillates in a frequency contrary to that used by most disruptor fields. Common energised weapons, such as the powered blades of the Legiones Astartes, are rendered to simply sharpened sections of metal swung by a strong arm under the effects of the Tarsus' energy field. Though it is uncertain as to whether this bladed buckler was designed specifically for the purpose of combatting Legiones Astartes weapons, or if such effectiveness is a coincidence of the experimentations into disruptor field technology which resulted in its own ability to penetrate solid plasteel plates, few can doubt that it offers both remarkable protection and offensive capability.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Tarsus buckler	Melee	+1	3	Melee, Energy Nullifier

Energy Nullifier: The AP value of any attack made against a model bearing wargear with the Energy Nullifier rule is reduced by 1 (for example, the attacks of a power sword striking a model equipped with a Tarsus buckler are resolved at AP 4 instead of AP 3).

Venatari Lance
The Venatari lance incorporates a lever-action example of the archaeotech kinetic destroyer. This ingenious design, borrowed from the ancient Enri Compendium gifted to Constantin Valdor by the Emperor, allows the kinetic destroyer to be fired stably in quick succession without significant additional recoil. The lance allows the Venatari to maintain their keen marksmanship while moving against the enemies of the Emperor both at a great height and at great speeds.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
- Power blade	Melee	As User/+1*	3/2*	Melee, Lightning Blows, Two-handed, Specialist Weapon
- Archaeotech repeater	12"	7	3	Assault 2, Master-crafted

**Use the second profile if the model has charged this turn.*

Legio Custodes Sagittarum Guard Squad

185 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Sagittarum Guard	5	5	5	5	2	5	2	9	2+

Unit Composition
- 3 Sagittarum Guard

Unit Type
- Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Adrastus bolt caliver
- Refractor field
- Plasma & krak grenades
- Custodian armour

Special Rules
- Legio Custodes
- Bulky
- Crusader

Dedicated Transport
- A Coronus Grav-carrier may be chosen as a Dedicated Transport for a Sagittarum Guard Squad if they number six models or less.

Options
- The Sagittarum Guard Squad may include:
  - Up to 7 additional Sagittarum Guard ..... +60 points each
- The entire Sagittarum Guard Squad may be equipped with any of the following options:
  - Melta bombs ..... +5 points each
  - Teleportation transponders ..... +5 points each
  - Solerite power gauntlet ..... +15 points each
- One member of the Sagittarum Guard Squad may exchange their Adrastus bolt caliver for an:
  - Adrathic destructor and a Magisterium vexilla ..... +10 points

HEAVY SUPPORT

Though less common within the ranks of the Legio Custodes than their peers, those warriors who comprise the Sagittarum Guard Sodalities nevertheless fulfil a number of vital roles within the Legio's order of battle. Their art of war, in contrast to the rest of the Custodian Guard, is focussed on the slaying of the foe primarily at distance and upon the devastating application of firepower on the battlefield.

In addition to this, the Sagittarum have entered legend as the hawk-sighted sentries of the Terran walls, charged with vigilance over the external borders of the Imperial Palace in ready anticipation of attack. Through decades of duty, their ability to recall movement patterns, faces and speech even years after the original incident was honed even more so than that of their peers, and as such their enhanced ability to analyse crowds for anticipated response grew in import upon the battlefields of the Great Crusade. The oversight cultivated on the walls of the Imperial Palace served to ensure that their presence among the detachments of the Emperor's guard was tailored to precisely excise the greatest threats of the enemy assault, annihilating it in the actinic fire of weapons the likes of which had not been seen in such concentration since the dreaded Dark Age of Technology.

Legio Custodes Caladius Grav-tank

220 points

	BS	Armour Front	Side	Rear	HP
Caladius Grav-tank	5	13	13	11	3

Unit Composition
- 1 Caladius Grav-tank

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Skimmer, Fast)

Wargear
- Twin-linked Lastrum bolt cannon
- Turret-mounted twin-linked Iliastus accelerator cannon
- Flare shield
- Machine spirit
- Searchlight

Special Rules
- Deep Strike
- Outflank
- Grav-backwash

Options
- A Caladius Grav-tank may take any of the following upgrades:
  - Armoured ceramite ..... +20 points
  - Extra armour ..... +5 points
- A Caladius Grav-tank may exchange its Iliastus accelerator cannon for a:
  - Twin-linked Arachnus heavy blaze cannon ..... +25 points

Grav-backwash
Unless the vehicle has become Immobilised, attackers suffer a -2 To Hit it in assault.

Heavy Support

Based upon the technology of the Coronus, the smaller Caladius grav-tank is designed to utilise the firepower afforded by the heaviest elements of the Legio Custodes arsenal on a highly mobile, protected platform. Given the fusion of advanced systems and weapons, the Caladius is perhaps the most powerful battleline armoured unit of its size in the Imperium's forces, utilising technologies and materials derived not only from the Dark Age of Technology, but from developments made as a result of the Great Crusade's two centuries of warfare.

The principal armament of the Caladius is a double-barrelled accelerator cannon, an advanced weapon which became a precursor to the more mass-produced cannon retro-developed into the armament of the Legiones Astartes Sicaran tank, which fulfils a similar role to the Caladius as a high speed armour destroyer. A less common variant is the Caladius-Annihilator, which featured an enhanced capacitor-fed Arachnus blaze cannon that is potent enough to pose a threat even to super-heavy armour.

Legio Custodes Contemptor-Galatus Dreadnought — 250 points

HEAVY SUPPORT

A sub-variant of the Contemptor-Achillus, the Contemptor-Galatus is designed to provide a mobile anchor point for a Legio Custodes battleline in the field. To this end, the Galatus is analogous to the armament and role of the specialised Sentinel Guard formations of the Legio Custodes, and is armed with a potent combination of a huge power blade and a vastly enlarged version of the Praesidium shield. The warblade allows the Contemptor-Galatus to swiftly and efficiently reap a murderous toll of any massed infantry assault at close quarters, or indeed hack through armoured vehicles and monstrous xenos with equal ease. It is the defensive power of the hulking Praesidium shield however that is the Contemptor-Galatus' most singular feature, as with it the already durable Contemptor chassis becomes nigh-on impregnable, even against the densest heavy firepower.

				Armour					
	WS	BS	S	Front	Side	Rear	I	A	HP
Galatus Dreadnought	6	5	8	13	13	11	5	4	3

Unit Composition
- 1 Contemptor-Galatus Dreadnought

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Walker)

Wargear
- One Galatus warblade with inbuilt twin-linked infernus incinerator
- Dreadnought Praesidium shield
- Smoke launchers
- Searchlight
- Refractor field
- Extra armour

Special Rules
- Fleet
- Move Through Cover
- Counter-attack

Galatus Warblade
A huge power blade wielded by the Dreadnought as easily as a Sentinel Guard might their own sword, the Galatus' signature weapon is able to shear through ranks of armoured troops with a single pass, while its inbuilt incinerator units are equally designed to swiftly purge a numerically superior foe.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Galatus warblade	Melee	x2	2	Melee, Shred, Rampage

Dreadnought Praesidium Shield
Essentially a scaled-up version of the prototype energy field reinforced battle shield carried by the Sentinel Guard of the Legio Custodes, the Dreadnought Praesidium shield makes the Contemptor-Galatus a truly formidable defensive element in any Legio Custodes battleline; a bulwark upon which the strongest shock attack might break and shatter.

When subject to attacks originating in its Front arc, or in assault, the model's invulnerable save is increased to 4+. In addition, attacks made in assault against it, other than by Gargantuan Creatures and Super-heavy Walkers, suffer a -1 penalty to hit (to a maximum of 6+) – note that this penalty has no effect on attacks which hit automatically.

"The histories of Old Night tell us to fear Men of Stone and Men of Iron. They should have warned us too, of the most terrible monsters of all; the Emperor's Men of Gold."

Attr. Minister Koja Zu of the Jermanic Steppes, M29

Legio Custodes Telemon Heavy Dreadnought

320 points

HEAVY SUPPORT

Fewer than a handful of Telemon Dreadnoughts are to be found within the ranks of the Legio Custodes, each intended to stand sentinel over its charges no matter the force brought against it. In part this rarity is due to the cost in labour and resources for the creation of such a superlative engine of war, for each bears at least one plate worked by the Emperor's own hand, and also the rarity of appropriate candidates to control them.

The honour of interment in one of the few existing Telemon sarcophagi is awarded only to the most celebrated warriors within the sodalities of the Legio Custodes, and until a worthy candidate finds his end in battle, the Dreadnoughts stand silent and empty. Despite this, the sheer power of an unleashed Telemon Dreadnought far outweighs the trials of its construction, for few can stand against the array of esoteric, hand-crafted weapons that grace its chassis or the ferocious will and warrior skill of the master Custodian who is interred within.

				Armour					
	WS	BS	S	Front	Side	Rear	I	A	HP
Telemon Dreadnought	6	5	9	13	13	12	5	4	4

Unit Composition
- 1 Telemon Heavy Dreadnought

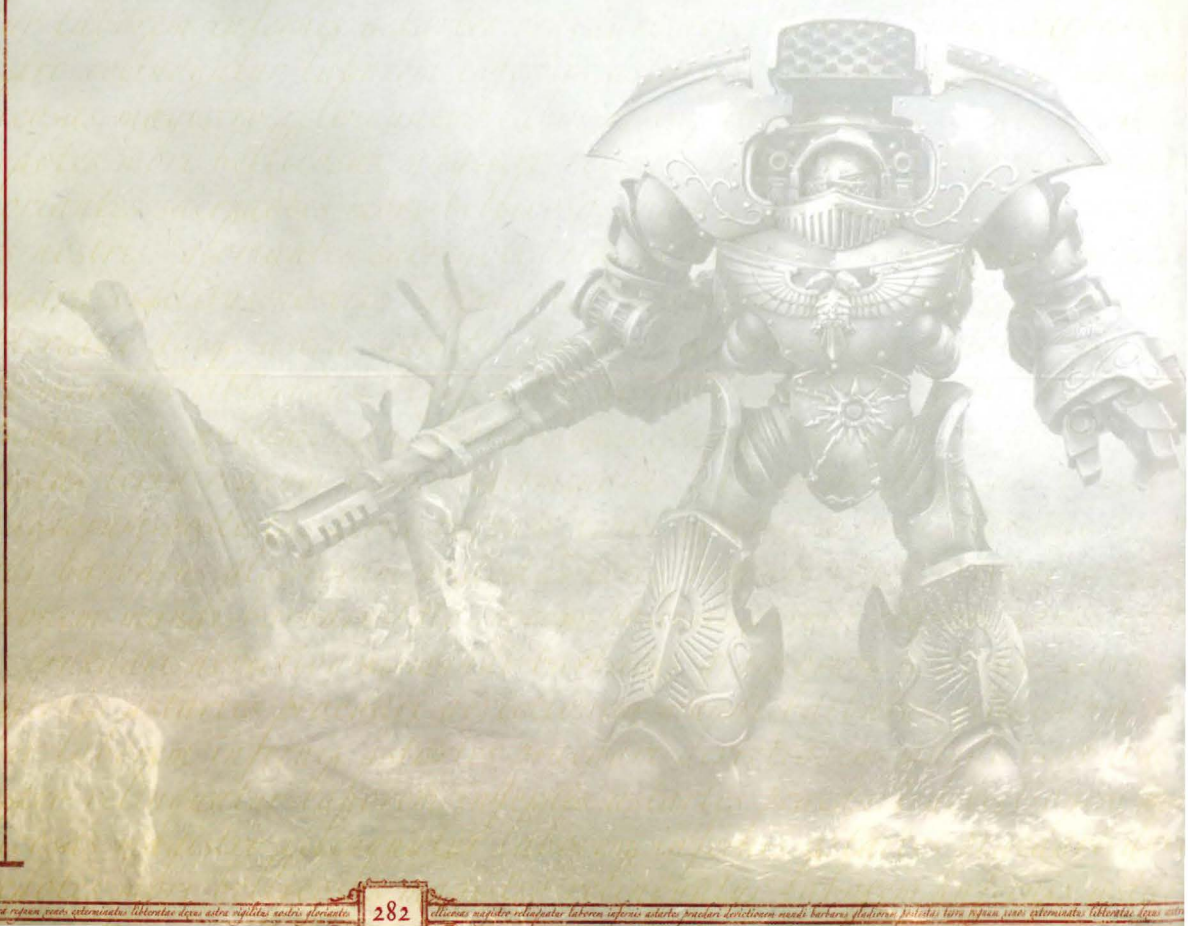
Unit Type
- Vehicle (Walker, Character)

Wargear
- Two Telemon Caestus with inbuilt Proteus plasma projectors*
- One torso-mounted Spiculus bolt launcher
- Smoke launchers
- Searchlight
- Extra armour
- Armoured ceramite
- Multi-layer refractor field

**Note that the bonus close combat attack is already included in the Telemon Dreadnought's profile.*

Special Rules
- Move Through Cover
- Unyielding Sentinel
- Indomitable Charge

Options
- A Telemon Heavy Dreadnought may exchange either or both of its Telemon Caestus and inbuilt Proteus plasma projector for an:
  - Arachnus storm cannon ..... +40 points
  - Iliastus accelerator culverin..... +25 points



Indomitable Charge
When charging, this model inflicts D6 Hammer of Wrath hits rather than just one.

Unyielding Sentinel
If this model suffers a penetrating hit, two dice must be rolled to determine the result on the Vehicle Damage table and the highest roll discarded before the final results are decided.

Multi-layer Refractor Field
A multi-layer refractor field confers a 4+ invulnerable save, increasing to 3+ against weapons with the Blast special rule or that use a template of any kind.

Arachnus Storm Cannon

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
- Concentrated blast	72"	9	1	Heavy 2, Exoshock
- Burst fire	48"	7	3	Heavy 7

Exoshock: If this weapon successfully scores a penetrating hit on a target, roll a D6. On the roll of a 4+, a second automatic penetrating hit is inflicted on the same target, against which cover saves may not be taken.

Iliastus Accelerator Culverin

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Iliastus accelerator culverin	36"	7	2	Heavy 5, Rending, Heliothermic Detonation

Heliothermic Detonation: If any target suffers one or more unsaved wounds from this weapon and is not slain, they must take an immediate Toughness test. If that test is failed, they suffer Instant Death. If a vehicle suffers a penetrating hit from this weapon, add +1 to the result rolled on the Vehicle Damage table.

Proteus Plasma Projector

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Plasma projector	Template	5	2	Assault 1, Gets Hot

Telemon Caestus

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Caestus	Melee	x2	2	Melee, Shred, Murderous Strike

Murderous Strike: Attacks with this rule cause Instant Death on a To Wound roll of 6. Roll any viable saves against these wounds separately to any other wounds the attack inflicts.

Spiculus Bolt Launcher

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Spiculus bolt launcher	48"	5	4	Heavy 5, Rending, Volley Fire

Volley Fire: If the bearer does not move in the Movement phase, it may double the number of shots fired by this weapon. Note that the Relentless special rule does not allow models to move and claim the benefit of this special rule.

Created as a dedicated super-heavy assault dropship for the Legio Custodes, the Enyalas pattern Orion can carry a full task force of the Emperor's Talons into combat. Protected by frontal armour superior to that of the Legiones Astartes Thunderhawk Gunship, its Arachnus heavy blaze cannon and heavy bolters can swiftly clear a landing zone of hostile infantry and armour with brutal efficiency, allowing the units within to deploy before it soars back into the sky to unleash death upon any foe who dares approach.

Legio Custodes Orion Assault Dropship

615 points

		Armour			
	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Orion Assault Dropship	5	13	12	11	7

Unit Composition
- 1 Orion Assault Dropship

Unit Type
- Super-heavy Flyer (Hover, Transport)

Wargear
- Two Arachnus pattern heavy blaze cannon
- Two nose-mounted twin-linked Lastrum bolt cannon
- Two Spiculus heavy bolt launchers
- Extra armour
- Armoured ceramite
- Eclipse shield
- Macro Arae-shrike
- Armoured cockpit

Special Rules
- Assault Vehicle
- Grav-backwash
- Deep Strike

Access Points
- One access ramp on the rear of the fuselage.

Transport Capacity
- The Orion Assault Dropship has a Transport capacity of 24 models, which may include a single Custodes Contemptor-Achillus Dreadnought or Contemptor-Galatus Dreadnought (counting as 10 models each).

Macro Arae-shrike

Ancient blight-code relays with the ability to pervert enemy cogitators and auguries are the subject of myth and baleful legend among many clades of the Mechanicum. The macro Arae-shrike fitted to all patterns of Enyalus pattern super-heavy flyers are even more effective than their smaller counterparts. While they are of no use in stealth operations, for the distortion they create forewarns the enemy of the approach of the Emperor's servants, in open warfare they obscure the exact position of the craft and foil attempts to intercept its arrival with any accuracy.

- **Deep Strike Interference:** When an enemy unit attempts to land via Deep Strike within 12" of a model equipped with an Arae-shrike, roll a D6 before they determine the result of their Deep Strike landing. On a 4+, the unit suffers a Deep Strike Mishap instead of landing – note that even models usually immune to Deep Strike Mishaps such as those that have Inertial Guidance systems or who do not usually scatter while Deep Striking are still subject to this effect.
- **Targeting Interference:** When a unit containing one or more models with an Arae-shrike is targeted by a weapon with the Barrage type, the attacking player must roll an additional D6 for the weapon's Scatter distance and pick the highest two results. A Hit! on the Scatter dice remains a Hit! however.
- **Interception Interference** – When this model enters the battlefield, and any enemy units declare the use of the Interceptor special rule to fire upon it, the intercepting player must roll a D6 for each unit that is attempting Interceptor fire after all such attacks have been declared. If any dice results in a 3 or less, then that unit may not make an Interceptor attack that turn, but may fire as normal in its next Shooting phase.

Eclipse Shield

A prototype variant of the flare shield based on Selenite technology, not only does the eclipse shield retard kinetic force and directed energy streams, but it also absorbs photons. Thus, when activated by heavy incoming fire, the shield appears as a midnight-black energy field, completely obscuring the Orion as it screams towards its drop zone.

An eclipse shield operates against shooting attacks that strike the Orion's Front armour. It reduces the Strength of attacks by weapons with the Template or Blast type by -2 and the Strength of other shooting attacks by -1. If a shooting attack targeting the Orion's Front armour inflicts a glancing hit or penetrating hit from any weapon attack then the Orion immediately gains the Shrouded special rule against all subsequent shooting attacks targeting it in the Front armour during the same phase. An eclipse shield has no effect on close combat attacks or attacks inflicted by the Destroyer special rule.

Grav-backwash

Whilst operating as a Hovering flyer, and as long as it has not been Immobilised, any enemy models targeting the Orion during the Fight sub-phase suffer a -2 To Hit modifier.

Spiculus Heavy Bolt Launcher

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Spiculus heavy bolt launcher	48"	7	4	Heavy 3, Rending

"The legacies of our 'Great Crusade' are false promises and broken treaties. We claimed to bring civilisation and enlightenment to our wayward brothers among the stars, but instead we brought only suffering. We have become the very tyrants which we once sought to topple."

The last words of Lord General Vannik of the Aethick Dragoons, executed by Lion El'Jonson in 989.M31

Legio Custodes Ares Gunship

640 points

	Armour			
	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Ares Gunship	5	13	12	10	7

Unit Composition
- 1 Ares Gunship

Unit Type
- Super-heavy Flyer (Hover)

Special Rules
- Grav-backwash
- Deep Strike
- Exposed Arachnus-capacitors

Wargear
- Two forward-mounted Arachnus pattern heavy blaze cannon
- One nose-mounted Arachnus magna-blaze cannon
- Two Infernus firebomb clusters
- Extra armour
- Armoured ceramite
- Eclipse shield (see page 285)
- Macro Arae-shrike (see page 285)
- Armoured cockpit

Lords of War

While the Legio Custodes serve primarily as a defensive force, such has not always been the case. During the Wars of Unity, the Custodes would amass in their fledgling battle ranks to fight by the Emperor's side as He led the Thunder Legion, and though they were few, they were equipped with the finest weaponry and vehicles. One of the most remarkable of these was the Ares Gunship, which earned its fearsome reputation on Ancient Terra and has quashed the Emperor's enemies on hundreds of worlds since.

The Ares was frequently used during Unification and in the early Great Crusade as a terror weapon, to bypass enemy armies as it blazed over their lines in the shadow of its eclipse shields. Primarily, it was used to strike a decisive blow with its immensely destructive Arachnus magna-blaze cannon against the monuments and edifices which an enemy culture held most dear to their hearts. Such was the infamy it earned in the Unity Wars that when the forces of Unification were embroiled in a month-long standstill on the Antipodean Peninsula, the mere sight of a single Area Gunship hovering above the domicile of that regime's Chancellor led to the enemy's unconditional surrender to the Emperor.

Arachnus magna-blaze cannon

Thought to have been a dead-end offshoot on the route of human research into las technology, the Arachnus magna-blaze cannon is nonetheless one of the most potent varieties of energy weapon within the reach of human science, and one jealously guarded by the Legio Custodes. However, such incredible firepower comes at great cost, for the housing needed to protect and keep cool the release of such tremendous pulses of energy is so resource intensive that all of the wealth of a noble family of Terra could be consumed in creating just one example of it. To this end, to make use of the Arachnus magna-blaze cannon, it must be cooled by heat dissipation engines such as those mounted within atmospheric re-entry capable heavy cargo spacecraft.

The entire chassis of the Ares Gunship is believed to have been designed around the Arachnus magna-blaze cannon, a weapon so incredibly powerful and potentially unstable that it is entrusted only to the Legio Custodes. So potent are the energies released by this weapon's energy generator that it requires elaborate cooling systems and must be kept external to the aircraft to prevent thermal build-up and warping of the vehicle's auramite hull.

Arachnus magna-blaze cannon

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
- Concentrated blast	72"	10	1	Primary weapon 2, Exoshock*, Master-Crafted, Armourbane, Instant Death
- Burst fire	48"	8	2	Heavy 2, Large Blast (5")

**Note that in the case of Exoshock, only a single additional penetrating hit can be caused, which is resolved on the Vehicle Damage table.*

Exposed Arachnus-capacitors

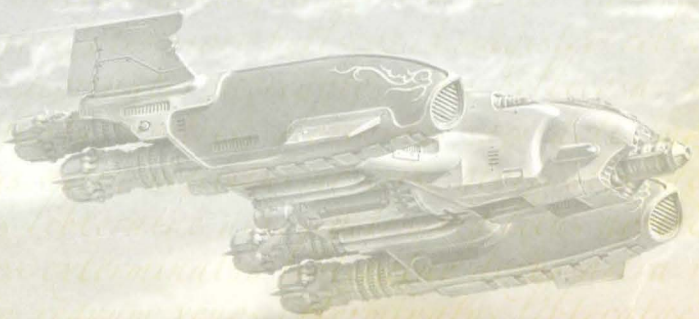
Contrary to the usual rules for Super-heavy Flyers, should the Ares Gunship suffer a penetrating hit from its Rear arc which results in an 'Explodes! result on the Vehicle Damage table, roll a D6. On a 5+, the Ares Gunship immediately loses all of its remaining Hull points and suffers Catastrophic Damage.

Infernus Firebomb Cluster

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Infernus firebomb cluster	-	5	4	Bomb 3, Large Blast (5"), Ignores Cover Saves, One Use

"What is a god? A being of immense power? The focus of ritual and worship? Something – some entity – greater than human and the master of a species? Surely, by these definitions, the Emperor is a god!"

Testimony given by a condemned savant of the Dashtodee brotherhood at their mass trial, M30



Space Marine Legion Army List Additions

The following section details additional rules, units and special characters for playing games of The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness, and is intended to be used in conjunction with the army list provided in the Legiones Astartes Age of Darkness Army List book.

"No cloak of fine silk girds my shoulders, no tales of honour and virtue spill from my lips, for I am no hero of legend lauded by the wise and the mighty for my deeds. Yet without my blade, this proud Imperium would crumble in the grips of night and fail, for it is rough barbarians like me who hold up the foundations of your palaces."

Orbaatar Noyan-Khan to the gathered dignitaries of the Thanatos Cluster

Space Marine Legion Consul Additions

Legion Warmonger Consul

+45 points

In seemingly every Legion, there is a cadre of Centurions who compete for the honour to make first contact with any enemy force or lead the spear-tip of any assault. These hardened commanders are much respected for their willingness to heroically throw themselves and their soldiers into the toughest resistance, and are entrusted to prosecute shock assaults which crush a foe in a single action, breaking its lines of supply and leaving its defences in disarray. To these warriors, the informal honorific 'Warmonger' is attributed, and any who are marked as such are destined for greatness, rapidly rising in stature and rank, should they survive.

Wargear

- Iron halo
- Digital lasers

Special Rules

A Legion Warmonger Consul and any unit he joins gain the Deep Strike special rule (this does not confer to any transport they are embarked in).

Legion Armistos Consul

+20 points

Few individuals are capable of the unending operation of maintaining, categorising, requisitioning and dispensing the vast arsenals of an entire Space Marine Legion. Beyond this, many such officers of the Legions work to improve the weaponry at their disposal, running simulations and field tests of augmented weaponry. The skills required of an Armistos are much sought after by the Legion's Master of Arsenal, particularly in those Legionaries of level temperament who are not apt to charge into the fray but are capable of supporting and supplying their battle brothers without desire for aggrandisement.

Wargear

- Void hardened armour
- Master-crafted heavy bolter
- Augury scanner

Options

- An Armistos may replace their master-crafted heavy bolter with a:
  - Master-crafted volkite culverin.....+5 points

Restrictions

- An Armistos may not take a jump pack, jetbike, bike or Terminator armour.

Special Rules

- **Prototype Weapons:** Before the game begins, select one Legion Heavy Support squad carrying the same heavy weapon as the Armistos (heavy bolter or volkite culverin). For the duration of the mission, all of that unit's heavy weapons are Master-crafted.
- Stubborn
- Legion Support Officer

Legion Primus Nullificator Consul +45 POINTS

With the increase of uncontrollable occurrences of Daemonic incursion across the galaxy, many officers within the Legiones Astartes on both sides of the conflict resorted to arcane and superstitious means to counter the little-understood threat. These pioneers sanctioned research into esoteric artefacts and weapons, and openly sought prohibited lore in the hope that it would provide wisdom capable of combatting the galaxy's intangible horrors. These commanders, who were first among the Nullificators, forged an example and encouraged those serving under them to also seek out by any means necessary the answers to the arcane threat.

Wargear
- Aether-shock maul*
- Hexagrammatic wards*
- Cataphractii Terminator armour

*see Legion Nullificators entry on page 293.

Special rules
- Adamantium Will
- May choose to take Psyker (Mastery Level 1) for +5 points, but must select powers from the Sanctic Daemonology discipline.
- **Credo Annihilato:** An army that includes at least one Primus Nullificator ignores the 0-1 restriction on Legion Nullificator units and may select them as Troops choices, but these units gain the Support Unit special rule.

Legion Esoterist +15 Points plus the Cost of Psychic Mastery

The Legion Esoterists were a late occurrence among many of the armies embroiled in the Horus Heresy, as members of the Librarius returned to their studies with or without the blessing of their Primarchs, and delved into the forbidden lore that saw common use on the battlefields of that dark age.

Psyker
- Must take a single level of Psychic Mastery and may take up to a single further level (costing 10 points each). They must use either the Malefic or Sanctic Daemonology disciplines to generate their powers.

Special Rules
- Legion Support Officer

Wargear
- Replaces their chainsword or combat blade (or power weapon if in Terminator armour) with a force weapon. A force sword, force axe or force stave may be chosen.
- May take any of the following options if Terminator armour has not been taken for the Esoterist:
  - Psyk-out grenades.....+5 points
  - Archaeotech pistol..... +20 points

"Though we may feel as if we die alone, remember that we carry within our veins the blood of our father and of the Emperor – with them in our hearts we are never alone in the galaxy, nor can we die in vain."

Attr to Elai Jannus of the Blood Angels 202nd Company

"Spend a pint of sweat and save a quart of blood."

Old pre-Unity Terran adage

Legion Mortificator Consul

+25 points

A specialised subset of Techmarines, Mortificators are ultimately responsible for the Legion's honoured dead, the furious Ancients entombed within cyborganic sarcophagi slumbering in the Legion's sepulchres, and show a near-fanatical devotion to their charges, in some cases going so far as to contravene the tenets of the Martian cult adopted by the Legions' Forge Lords. A Mortificator's primary duties include the protection during slumber and rousing during war of the Legion's complement of Dreadnoughts, and when necessary, extends to the controlling of those Dreadnoughts too long asleep or too choleric to be considered wholly sane.

Wargear
- Servo-arm
- Corposant stave

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Corposant stave	-	User +1	4	Melee, Two-handed, Concussive, Haywire

For each successful hit against a target vehicle in close combat, roll once on the Haywire table (see The Horus Heresy Age of Darkness Rulebook) instead of rolling for armour penetration normally.

Restrictions
- A Mortificator may not take a jump pack, jetbike or bike.

Special Rules

Keeper of the Dead: A single Legion Dreadnought Talon, Legion Contemptor Dreadnought Talon or Legion Contemptor-Cortus Dreadnought Talon numbering no fewer than two Dreadnoughts must be selected as part of the Mortificator's unit, and may, contrary to the usual unit size for that Talon, take up to a maximum of five Dreadnoughts.

The Dreadnoughts in this unit lose the Dreadnought Talon special rule. The entire unit including the Mortificator is instead treated as a vehicle squadron, with the exception that each model in the unit may select a different target in the Shooting phase (though each model must still shoot all of its ranged weapons at a single target). All models in the unit must make a Run move if any models choose to, and must charge the same target.

This unit does not use up an additional Force Organisation choice and the Mortificator must be included as part of the unit, even if it includes vehicles. When resolving shooting attacks or witchfire psychic powers against this unit, resolve hits against Dreadnoughts first, even if the Mortificator is the closest model (unless an attack may choose to target the Mortificator specifically, e.g., using Precision Shots). While any Dreadnoughts are part of the unit, the Mortificator is Fearless and may not leave this unit.

In the Assault phase, if two or more Dreadnoughts in this unit target a single model with their close combat attacks, they each gain the Sunder and Shred special rules for these close combat attacks.

The effects of the Mortificator's Legiones Astartes rule do not confer to the Dreadnoughts in this unit in any way.

Ancient Devotion: So long as the Mortificator has not been removed as a casualty, Dreadnoughts in a Mortificator's unit may attempt, through the ministrations of the Consul, to ignore any glancing or penetrating hits they have suffered. This is not a saving throw, and cannot be taken against Destroyer attacks. Roll a D6 each time an unsaved Hull point loss is suffered. On a 4 or less, you must take the glancing or penetrating hit as normal. On a 5+, the unsaved Hull point is ignored – treat it as having been saved. Roll once for each Hull point loss suffered.

0-1 Legion Nullificators

225 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Nullificators	4	4	4	4	1	4	2	10	2+
Nullificator Sergeant	5	4	4	4	1	4	3	10	2+

Unit Composition
- 4 Nullificators
- 1 Nullificator Sergeant

Unit Type
- Nullificators: Infantry
- Nullificator Sergeant: Infantry (Character)

Wargear
- Cataphractii Terminator armour
- Aether-shock maul
- Combi-bolter
- Hexagrammatic wards

Special Rules
- Legiones Astartes
- Stubborn
- Adamantium Will

Options
- The unit may take:
  - Up to 5 additional Nullificators ..... +45 points each
- Any model in the unit may exchange their aether-shock maul for a:
  - Power fist ..... +15 points each
- Any model in the unit may exchange their combi-bolter for a:
  - Toxiferran flamer (see page 302) ..... +10 points each
- Any model in the unit may take a grenade harness ..... +10 points each
- The Nullificator Sergeant may exchange their aether-shock maul for one of the following weapons:
  - Power weapon ..... Free
  - Power fist ..... +15 points
  - Thunder hammer ..... +10 points

Aether-shock Mauls

Based on a similar technology to the volkite weapons of Mars, these vicious mauls discharge pulses of stored actinic energy when they strike a foe.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Aether-shock maul	-	User +2	4	Melee, Deflagrate

Hexagrammatic Wards

Varying widely in form and efficacy based on both the origin and experience of the unit, wards either etched into or worn upon the armour of Nullificators quickly became a standard feature of their panoply of war as the terrors of the Horus Heresy veered further into the realms of madness. By the end of the Scouring, such measures were codified as a sub-surface pattern of etched warding runes, formed of rare alloys and mineral compounds, but during the earliest years of the Horus Heresy often amounted to little more than half-understood scrawlings and pagan charms.

When targeted with a shooting attack, close combat attack or Witchfire psychic power by a model with the Daemon or Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule, a model with hexagrammatic wards may re-roll any failed invulnerable saves made against that attack.

Only as Horus' rebels revealed the true corruption at their hearts did the Nullificators begin to appear in the order of battle of the Legiones Astartes. The first such units were ad-hoc assemblies of veteran warriors wielding hastily manufactured weaponry and poorly understood superstition in a brave attempt to stem the tide of madness Horus had unleashed upon the Imperium. Few of these valiant warriors would survive, but the wisdom bought with their lives armed their successors all the better. By the final years of the Horus Heresy, the Nullificators had become a highly disciplined arm of the Legions, forged in the crucible of desperation to counter the threat of the foulest xenos breeds and the daemonic incursions that had become all too frequent.

Legion Sicaran Omega Tank Destroyer Squadron

220 points per model

HEAVY SUPPORT

Retrofitted to allow the Sicaran hull to carry heavier firepower, the Omega is a formidable tank hunter. It utilises the speed provided by the Sicaran's engines to apply overwhelming short range firepower in battle, racing forwards to ambush and obliterate the lumbering siege tanks of enemy columns. Its simplified, some might say crude, systems are all capable of being produced by the lesser forges attached to many Space Marine strongholds, allowing them to replace losses of more complex vehicles even as the various Forge Worlds became isolated by war and mistrust at the height of the Horus Heresy.

The main weaponry of the Omega reflects this stopgap approach, being imperfect, over-sized copies of the Mechanicum's plasma-fusil weaponry and relying on the brutal application of overwhelming force to reduce enemy armour to wrecks instead of the precise annihilation of more advanced weapons systems. Despite these drawbacks, the Omega proved effective in battle and its designs quickly spread from Legion to Legion and, as examples were captured in battle, from faction to faction.

		Armour			
	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Sicaran Omega	4	13	12	12	3

Unit Composition
- 1-2 Sicaran Omega Tank Destroyers

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Tank, Fast)

Wargear
- Turret-mounted Omega plasma array
- Hull-mounted heavy bolter
- Extra armour
- Searchlight
- Smoke launchers

Special Rules
- Volatile Plasma Containment

Options
- All Sicaran Omegas in the squadron may take any of the following:
  - Hunter-killer missile ..... +5 points per model
  - Dozer blade ..... +5 points per model
  - Auxiliary drive ..... +10 points per model
  - Armoured ceramite ..... +20 points per model
- Any Sicaran Omega may take one of the following sets of two sponson weapons:
  - Heavy bolters ..... +20 points each
  - Lascannon ..... +40 points each
- Any Sicaran Omega may take one of the following additional pintle-mounted weapons:
  - Twin-linked bolter ..... +5 points each
  - Combi-weapon ..... +5 points each
  - Heavy bolter ..... +10 points each
  - Heavy flamer ..... +10 points each
  - Multi-melta ..... +15 points each
  - Havoc launcher ..... +15 points each

Omega Plasma Array

The plasma array mounted on the Sicaran Omega is capable of focusing and projecting a highly pressurised stream of volatile and highly charged plasma, vaporising outer armour layers and literally burning through an enemy tank's defences. This crude application of plasma technology is rarely capable of the elegant destruction of weapons of the same calibre as the ubiquitous lascannon, but is capable of reducing even the toughest enemy vehicles to molten ruin.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Omega plasma array				
- Plasma volley	24"	7	2	Heavy 6, Twin-linked
- Sustained burn	24"	9	1	Heavy 1, Plasma Burn, Twin-linked, Gets Hot

Plasma Burn: If the target of this weapon is a Vehicle and that model loses one or more Hull points as the result of an attack from this weapon, roll a D6. On a 4+, the target vehicle loses additional Hull points with no cover saves allowed. If the attack resulted in a glancing hit, the number of additional Hull points inflicted is 1. If the attack resulted in a penetrating hit, the number of additional Hull points inflicted is D3.

Volatile Plasma Containment

The highly charged plasma utilised by the Sicaran Omega is contained at pressures that are difficult to regulate for even the most skilled Techmarines of the Legions, and even a slight miscalculation can lead to disaster. When such an engine suffers a catastrophic breach, the destruction wrought is far more terrible than for other vehicles of its class. Should a Sicaran Omega suffer an Explodes! result on the Vehicle Damage table, add +2 to the Strength and +3" to the radius of the blast. A Sicaran Omega immediately suffers an Explodes! result if it loses its final Hull point due to the Gets Hot special rule.

Legion Sicaran Punisher Assault Tank Squadron

190 points per model

	Armour			
	BS	Front	Side	Rear	HP
Sicaran Punisher	4	13	12	12	3

Unit Composition
- 1-2 Sicaran Punishers

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Tank, Fast)

Wargear
- Turret-mounted Punisher rotary cannon
- Hull-mounted heavy bolter
- Extra armour
- Searchlight
- Smoke launchers

Special Rules
- Rolling Thunder

Options
- All Sicaran Punishers in the squadron may take any of the following:
  - Hunter-killer missile ..... +5 points per model
  - Dozer blade ..... +5 points per model
  - Auxiliary drive ..... +10 points per model
  - Armoured ceramite ..... +20 points per model
- Any Sicaran Punisher may take one of the following sets of two sponson weapons:
  - Heavy bolters ..... +20 points each
  - Lascannon ..... +40 points each
- Any Sicaran Punisher may take one of the following additional pintle-mounted weapons:
  - Twin-linked bolter ..... +5 points each
  - Combi-weapon ..... +5 points each
  - Heavy bolter ..... +10 points each
  - Heavy flamer ..... +10 points each
  - Multi-melta ..... +15 points each
  - Havoc launcher ..... +15 points each

Punisher Rotary Cannon

The punisher rotary cannon fires a ceaseless barrage of high calibre shells, supported by a complex ammo-feed array and a gyro-assisted recoil compensator. Though each of the shells is little more than a solid ferro-carbide slug, the sheer rate of fire that this weapon is capable of is more than sufficient for the obliteration of large infantry formations or light vehicles.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Punisher rotary cannon	36"	5	4	Heavy 18

Rolling Thunder

If given the opportunity to assume a hull down position and fully engage the extensive recoil absorption servos built into the vehicle's turret mechanism, the Punisher's crew is capable of vastly increasing the weapon's already prodigious rate of fire, saturating the target area with so many shells that even the heaviest armour cannot fully protect those caught within.

On any turn in which the Sicaran Punisher does not move in both the Movement phase and Shooting phase, the controlling player may choose to have the punisher rotary cannon gain the Rending special rule for its shooting attacks made that turn.

Heavy Support

The Punisher-type Sicaran variant came into general use amongst the various Legions in the final days of the Great Crusade, although the punisher rotary cannon it mounts has a far older history. Originally mounted on the now rare Cerberus pattern main battle tanks, the Punisher had established a reputation as a deadly tool in the eradication of massed conscript infantry or hordes of swarming xenos creatures, limited only by its relatively short range and prodigious appetite for munitions. Married to the Sicaran hull, where the impressive speed of that vehicle effectively negated the short range of the weapon, and the complex feed assemblies developed as part of the various Terran accelerator cannon, the Punisher once again saw widespread use among the Legions, though now it was employed against the very warriors it was intended to protect.

Legion Sicaran Arcus Strike Tank

205 points per model

	BS	Armour Front	Side	Rear	HP
Sicaran Arcus	4	13	12	12	3

Unit Composition
- 1 Sicaran Arcus Strike Tank

Unit Type
- Vehicle (Tank, Fast)

Wargear
- Turret-mounted twin Arcus launcher with Arcus warheads
- Hull-mounted heavy bolter
- Extra armour
- Searchlight
- Smoke launchers

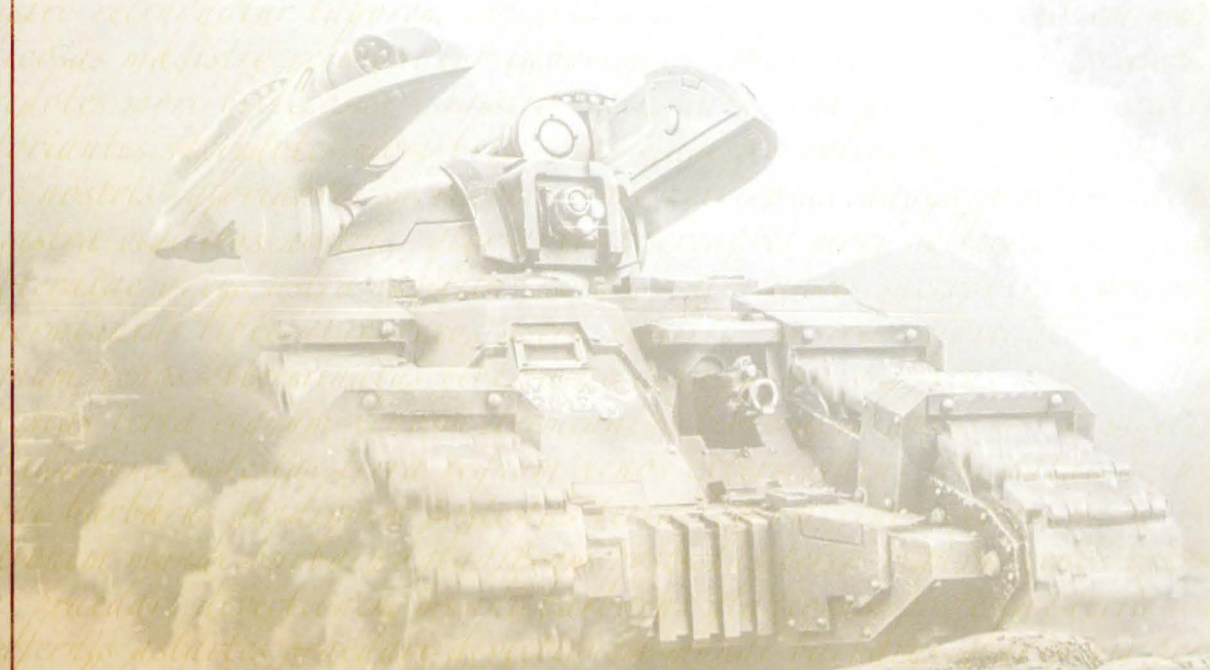
Special Rules
- Ripple Fire

Options
- The Sicaran Arcus may take any of the following:
  - Skyspear warheads ..... +15 points
  - Pyrax warheads ..... +20 points
  - Neutron-flux warheads ..... +30 points
- The Sicaran Arcus may take any of the following:
  - Hunter-killer missile ..... +5 points
  - Dozer blade ..... +5 points
  - Auxiliary drive ..... +10 points
  - Armoured ceramite ..... +20 points
- The Sicaran Arcus may take one of the following sets of two sponson weapons:
  - Heavy bolters ..... +20 points
  - Lascannon ..... +40 points
- The Sicaran Arcus may take one of the following additional pintle-mounted weapons:
  - Twin-linked bolter ..... +5 points
  - Combi-weapon ..... +5 points
  - Heavy bolter ..... +10 points
  - Heavy flamer ..... +10 points
  - Multi-melta ..... +15 points
  - Havoc launcher ..... +15 points

HEAVY SUPPORT

As part of a program initiated by the Primarch Roboute Guilliman, seeking to grant a Legion strike force access to highly specialised weapon systems without the need to employ numerous vehicles for each role, the Sicaran hull was chosen to mount the newly developed twin Arcus launcher. Capable of deploying a wide range of warheads, each crafted to fulfil a distinct tactical niche, the Arcus was intended to become the cornerstone of a new tactical doctrine the Master of Ultramar had begun to formulate, allowing small Legiones Astartes forces to operate without extensive support and in smaller numbers than during the Great Crusade.

Despite being limited to a few prototype vehicles at the onset of the Horus Heresy, and the doctrinal issues that kept it out of production on most major Forge Worlds, a number of Legion home worlds produced small numbers of this variant. Of particular note is the inclusion of the neutron-flux warhead, a Terran development dating back to the years prior to the alliance with Mars. This weapon saturates the silica stratum of the cybernetica cortex employed by Mechanicum automata with xenon, causing terminal cascade failures in these systems. Continued production of these weapons was the cause of the Mechanicum's refusal to sanction the Arcus pattern hull.



Twin Arcus Launcher
The Arcus launcher is based upon the rotary missile launcher developed for the Xiphon Strike Fighter, although the greater size of the mounting on the Sicaran hull allows for a more complex feed mechanism and the employment of multiple warhead types.

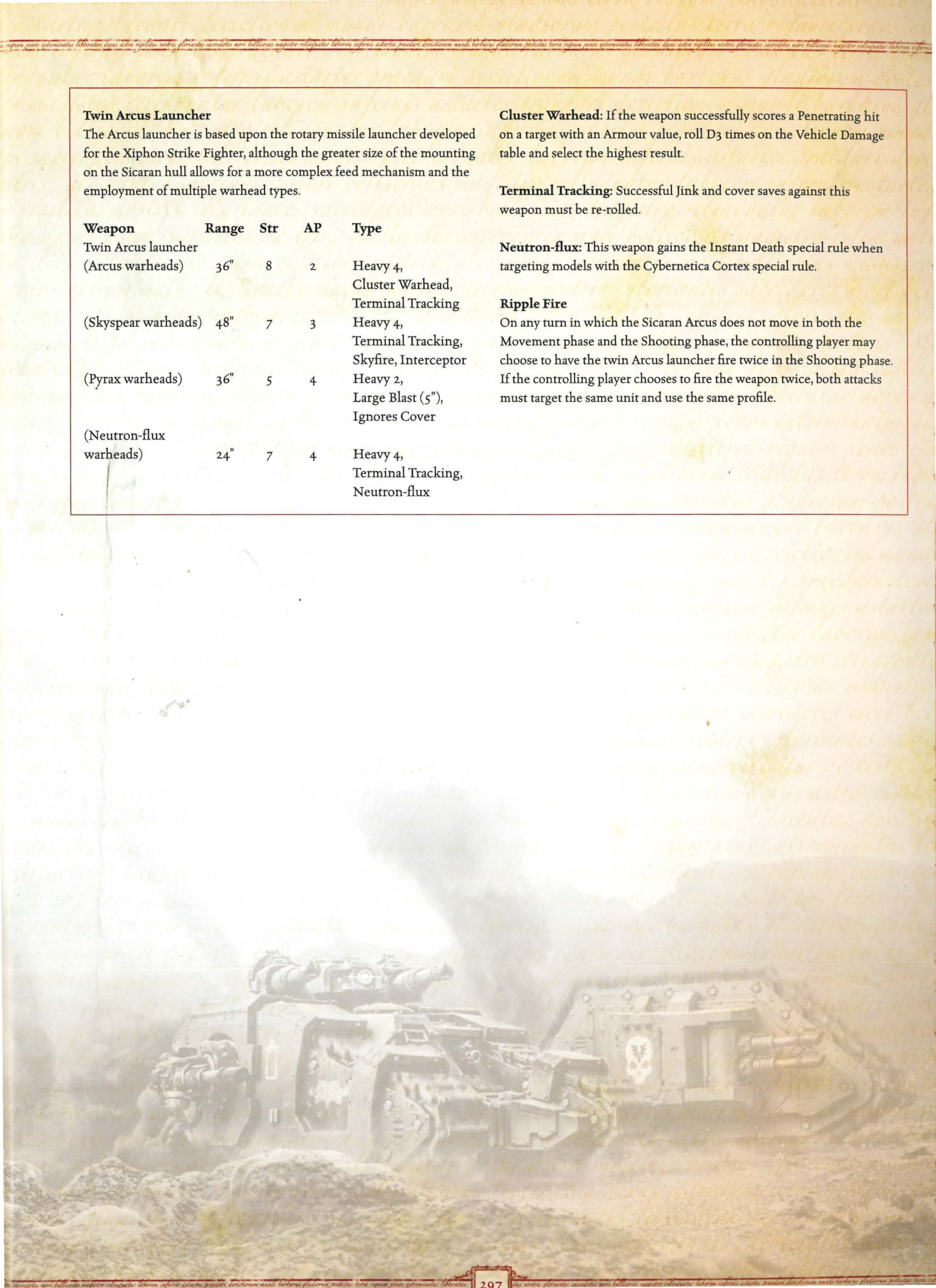
Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Twin Arcus launcher (Arcus warheads)	36"	8	2	Heavy 4, Cluster Warhead, Terminal Tracking
(Skyspear warheads)	48"	7	3	Heavy 4, Terminal Tracking, Skyfire, Interceptor
(Pyrax warheads)	36"	5	4	Heavy 2, Large Blast (5"), Ignores Cover
(Neutron-flux warheads)	24"	7	4	Heavy 4, Terminal Tracking, Neutron-flux

Cluster Warhead: If the weapon successfully scores a Penetrating hit on a target with an Armour value, roll D3 times on the Vehicle Damage table and select the highest result.

Terminal Tracking: Successful Jink and cover saves against this weapon must be re-rolled.

Neutron-flux: This weapon gains the Instant Death special rule when targeting models with the Cybernetica Cortex special rule.

Ripple Fire
On any turn in which the Sicaran Arcus does not move in both the Movement phase and the Shooting phase, the controlling player may choose to have the twin Arcus launcher fire twice in the Shooting phase. If the controlling player chooses to fire the weapon twice, both attacks must target the same unit and use the same profile.



PSYARKANA

'The Council of Terra scorns us and restricts our use of the most effective devices in our arsenals. They are blinkered fools. We will use every weapon available to bring the swiftest end to the enemies of Mankind, with or without the permission of cowards.'

From the arraignment of censured Captain Dramask of the Dusk Raiders

"The ritual had completed and the Daemon had entered me though I resisted, gnawing at the very power of the runes I had cast to re-direct it. My only recourse was to use the dread Device. It was suicide chosen gladly, and I willed eternity to swallow me that I might be spared from… the other fate. I died that day, and yet I still live."

From the testimony of the executed heretic, Sebastiaan of the Four Voices

Relics of the Great Crusade

A vast panoply of the arcane exists within the galaxy, spread far and wide on the worlds and in the fleets of Mankind and the Outsider. Attempting to apply a classification or category based on a single shared property of all of these relics, tangible and intangible, is a nigh-on impossible task, for they are myriad in form and use. The term '*psyarkana*' is used in lieu of such a classification, and is considered to be a catch-all term to refer to ill-understandable and ill-definable items or practices, often of ancient or mysterious provenance. Broadly though, psyarkana fall into two groups: techno-arcana and esoterica.

Techno-arcana are usually strange relics and devices based upon what can be loosely understood to function through technological and scientific means, though rarely can these means be reproduced. Such items, be they human or xenos in origin, are recovered from lost civilisations, discovered in the darkest reaches of space or, under the rarest circumstances, created by the artifices of the Imperium. They can be potent archaeotech stamped from those STCs which survived the Age of Strife or alien artifices which predate the evolution of Mankind entirely. Esoterica, however, often refers to intangible rituals, practices and powers as found in ancient manuscripts which are not easily understood. Often these are wielded through psychic or arcane means, and are suggested to interact in some respect with the currents of the Warp, though this is not confirmed to be true in all cases. Whatever the truth behind such arcane articles, all produce effects contrary to our grasp of the order of nature.

Many arcane technologies and strange devices were recovered during the Great Crusade, both relics of Mankind's lost endeavours from the Dark Age of Technology and the product of alien minds and cultures now lost to history. Of these relics few now remain, most were destroyed by the Legiones Astartes as they advanced across the galaxy, deemed too dangerous or profane to remain in human hands. However, some yet survive, either taken as trophies or consigned to the vaults of the Legions or the laboratories of the Mechanicum. In particular, the Iron Hands and their master, Ferrus Manus, proved prolific in their acquisition and subsequent interment of powerful and dangerous relics, a number of which would re-emerge after their keeper's death.

During the Horus Heresy, desperation led many to wield psyarkana they little understood or could scarcely control. Those organisations previously forbidden from making use of dangerous techno-arcana, particularly amongst the Mechanicum and Iron Hands Legion, would continue to covet these strange technologies. Those who had once searched for proscribed esoterica, experimenting with their knowledge in secret would go on to openly embrace it. Many would wage their own campaigns contrary to the orders of both the Warmaster and the Emperor to take possession of psyarkana at the height of the Age of Darkness. The use of these psyarkana relics carried with it the risk of terrible consequence, or else irrevocably tainted the user. Regardless, such rituals and devices were sought after by every faction of the Horus Heresy and frequently changed ownership; pried from the lifeless hands of the vanquished.

Using Psyarkana in Games of the Age of Darkness

Psyarkana are new options available for use in your games of The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness. These are represented as Wargear items available to be taken as described in the following entries, with the additional restriction that a single Independent Character model may only take one Psyarkana relic, and named special characters may not take any Psyarkana relics unless stated in their profile.

In this section, when a rule makes a reference to Psykers, this includes all models with the Psyker, Brotherhood of Psykers/Sorcerers or Psychic Pilot special rules and any model which has any Psychic Mastery levels. Additionally, when a rule makes a reference to Daemons, this includes all models with the Daemon and Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rules.

Null-amp Collars

Recovered as part of a joint operation by the Iron Hands and World Eaters Legions, these devices are the product of a human civilisation far removed from that which survived on Old Earth, now long forgotten. In form they are thick collars of black silicate material, dense and seemingly without obvious components. When fitted to a living being, they project an aura that pacifies the churning of the Aether in the vicinity of the device, though at cost to the focus and mental acuity of the bearer. Before its disbandment, the fledgling Librarius project held several examples of these devices for study as potential anti-psyker weapons, and these most likely found their way into the hands of the Legions after that body's disbandment at the Emperor's orders. In later years, the few surviving examples of this technology have been used to engineer a 'psychic hood' to augment the ability of a human psyker to combat warp magic without the debilitating cost of the original devices.

Any Praetor who is a Psyker, and any Librarian or Esoterist Consul may take a Null-amp Collar for +15 points.

A model equipped with a Null-amp Collar may attempt to Deny the Witch whenever either the unit it is part of, or any other friendly or enemy unit within 12" is the target of a Psychic Power of any type (including a Blessing). If the Deny the Witch attempt is failed, the power is resolved as normal, but affects only the initial target, not the bearer of the Null-amp collar. A model equipped with a Null-amp Collar that is embarked within a Transport or Fortification can only use the Null-amp Collar to nullify powers targeting the vehicle or building they are embarked within. Any model equipped with a Null-amp Collar has its Initiative characteristic reduced by -1.

Empyreal Lances

The early Imperium was not the first human civilisation contacted by the shattered remnants of the fallen Eldar empire. Far older and more debased branches of Mankind had preyed upon the vast world-arks of the fleeing Eldar, and these corrupted off-shoots of humanity fell before the hosts of the Great Crusade, with the Raven Guard being chief among their slayers. With their fall, the relics of a number of these civilisations became trophies of the victorious hosts of the Emperor. Among them were the weapons known as empyreal lances, spears crafted from the living bone of captured Eldar spacecraft and defaced with carven glyphs of ancient provenance and dubious purpose. Though of limited use against ceramite plating, such artefacts have been known to have a devastating effect on those cursed with psychic abilities, particularly amongst certain xenos breeds, and in the later years of the Horus Heresy saw some use among the upper echelons of the forces at war.

Any Praetor or Champion Consul may exchange their chainsword or close combat weapon for an Empyreal lance for +25 points, or their power weapon if equipped with Terminator armour for +20 points.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Empyreal lance	Melee	+1/+2*	4/2*	Melee, Psy-lash, Specialist weapon

**When attacking a unit with the Psyker, Brotherhood of Psykers/Sorcerers, Psychic Pilot, Daemon or Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rules, use the second set of values, against all other models use the first set.*

Psy-lash: If a weapon with this special rule causes an unsaved wound on a model with the Daemon, Psyker, Brotherhood of Psykers/ Sorcerers or Psychic Pilot special rule then one randomly selected model in the unit with that special rule suffers Perils of the Warp in addition to any other damage.

Armatus Necrotechnica

These secret devices of necro-technic engineering were among the fel technologies once bound within the sealed vaults of Ferrus Manus. Outside of the Iron Hands Legion, the knowledge of their very existence was limited to prohibited circles of the Emperor's own household and used as part of the construction of the warlord-sinister Psi-Titans. This technology is capable of harnessing the stolen energy of sentient life to power engines of mechanical destruction and repair. How they were later spread is unknown, but must surely have involved the defection or capture of high-ranking Terran artificers from the Imperial Palace or the secretive tech-clades of Luna, for it is thought improbable that even those Iron Fathers who raided the Vaults of Mimir would dare to unleash such dark techno-heresy upon the galaxy. Whatever their origin, these foul technologies were witnessed on several battlefields as the Horus Heresy drew towards its climax, both on Traitor armour and among the ranks of Ferrus Manus' grief-maddened sons.

One vehicle with the Tank type in an army may be upgraded to use the Armatus Necrotechnica for +50 points.

Whenever a unit (friendly or enemy) within 6" of a vehicle with this upgrade loses a model as a casualty, roll a D6. On a 6, the vehicle regains 1 Hull Point. This may not bring it above the number of Hull Points listed on its army list entry. In addition, any unit (friendly or enemy) within 6" of an Armatus Necrotechnica must reduce its Leadership value by -1. Units with the Stubborn special rule may not ignore this modifier.

The Psi-reactive Arsenal

The weapons that follow are part of the Psi-reactive Arsenal and were commonly used by the darker facets of many Legions during the Age of Darkness. This arsenal incorporates an extensive armoury of weapons which are employed with the knowledge that their properties make them disproportionately capable of harming those touched by the Warp.

Eligible Independent Characters may take these weapons in addition to another Psyarkana relic.

Toxiferran weapons

Improvised chemical combustion mixtures were tested by the Dusk Raiders during the first Xabian War, tainting the earth under the feeding tentacles of that world's monstrosities. Most deadly among these concoctions was the Toxiferran composition. This was a highly volatile mixture of chemicals laced with horrific toxins and psi-reactive particulate matter which earned a reputation to rival even the dread phosphex and molecular acids in its destructive capacity. This mixture was later developed into bespoke weapons which were shared with the other nascent Legions, from replacements for promethium fuel tanks to the Toxiferno cannon which utilises a multi-chemical injection system to accelerate the combustion process, resulting in billowing clouds of scalding psi-reactive smoke.

Any Legion Destroyer Space Marine may exchange a hand flamer for a Toxiferran flamer for free.

Any Legion Contemptor Dreadnought or Contemptor-Cortus Dreadnought may replace either its close combat weapon and inbuilt combi-bolter or its twin-linked heavy bolter with a Toxiferno cannon for +10 points.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Toxiferran flamer	Template	4	5	Assault 1, Poisoned (3+), Tainted
Toxiferno cannon	Template	7	4	Heavy 1, Shred, Tainted

Tainted: Any successful wound dealt by a weapon with this special rule removes the effects of any psychic blessing which is active on the target unit. In addition, any To Wound roll of a 6 with this weapon is resolved at AP 2.

Psyk-out Munitions

Originally a weapon solely produced and utilised by the Orders Militant of the Great Astronomican, the use of these munitions, whose payload is akin to psychically charged ash, quickly spread to the more specialised echelons of the Legions. By the later years of the Horus Heresy, their use by Legion Destroyers was almost commonplace in war zones plagued by esoteric phenomenon or the rogue psykers sometimes deployed by Traitor forces in a similar manner to unguided bombs.

Any Legion Vigilator, Moritat or Saboteur Consul may take Psyk-out grenades for +2 points.

Any Legion Destroyer Squad may choose to take any of the following options:

- The entire squad may take Psyk-out grenades for +5 points.
- Any model in the unit may exchange their hand flamer with a grenade launcher with Psyk-out grenades for free.
- All models in the unit equipped with missile launchers may take Psyk-out missiles in addition to their rad missiles for +5 points.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Psyk-out grenade				
- Thrown	8"	2	-	Assault 1, Blast (3"), Psi-shock
- Launcher	24"	2	-	Assault 1, Blast (3"), Psi-shock
Psyk-out missile	48"	2	-	Heavy 1, Blast (3"), Pinning, Psi-shock

Psi-shock: If a unit containing at least one Daemon or Psyker (i.e., a model with the Psyker, Brotherhood of Psykers/Sorcerers, Psychic Pilot, Daemon or Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule) is hit by a weapon with the Psi-shock special rule, one randomly determined Psyker or Daemon model in the unit suffers Perils of the Warp in addition to any other damage.

Corpus Mymir

One among many of the innovations of Zhao-Arkhad that saw that Forge World's censure by the orthodox Mechanicum authorities of Mars, the Corpus Mymir is a psychically active servo-skull. Contained within the drone, the brain of a psyker is kept at a basic level of activity through a combination of drugs and electro-charge implants, allowing it to maintain some basic telepathic and divinatory functions. Before the removal and implantation of the brain, the donor, who was often forcibly selected from the highly psychically active population of the moons of Zhao-Arkhad, receives extensive mimetic conditioning and hypno-therapy, fixating it upon a simple auto-suggestive phrase. Repetition of this phrase by an authorised operator triggers the subconscious manifestation of simple psychic phenomena by the servo-skull. The fact that these devices, often prone to catastrophic failure, became commonplace on the battlefields of the southern Imperium during the savage inter-Forge wars of the late Horus Heresy speaks as much of the desperation of the combatants as it does to the efficacy of the weapon.

One Legion Praetor, Magos Prime or Magos Dominus in an army may take a single Corpus Mymir for +30 points.

A Corpus Mymir should be represented by an appropriate model on a 25mm base and must remain within 2" of the model for which it is purchased, and if that model is removed as a casualty so too is the Corpus Mymir. The Corpus Mymir cannot be charged or targeted by shooting or close combat attacks. In any of the controlling player's Psychic phases, the Corpus Mymir may be activated. When activated, roll a D6 and consult the table below:

D6	Result
1	The psychic power Misfortune from the Divination discipline is manifested*, however the power targets the unit containing the model for which the Corpus Mymir was purchased.
2	The psychic power Foreboding from the Divination discipline is manifested*, however the effects apply to the model for which the Corpus Mymir was purchased.
3	The psychic power Precognition from the Divination discipline is manifested*, however the effects apply to the model for which the Corpus Mymir was purchased.
4	The psychic power Perfect Timing from the Divination discipline is manifested*, however the effects apply to the model for which the Corpus Mymir was purchased.
5	The psychic power Shrouding from the Telepathy discipline is manifested*, however the effects apply to the model for which the Corpus Mymir was purchased.
6	The Corpus Mymir is overcome by the baleful energies it channels and detonates, causing a Strength 3 AP 2 hit with the Fleshbane special rule to all models within 3". Remove the Corpus Mymir from play after resolving these hits.

**Powers manifested by this rule do not require Warp Charges or a Psychic test, but the opposing player may use Deny the Witch to nullify them. For the purpose of Deny the Witch, these abilities are assumed to have generated exactly enough Warp Charges to manifest the power. Special rules which automatically negate psychic powers negate any power generated by this rule.*

Psi-resonant Pentacles

A class of artefacts recovered from the Vrant Cluster among the troves of the Reclaimants, their Pentacular Crowns or protective armour pieces such as Pentagrammic Sallets and Five-sided Bevors are all painstakingly inscribed with sigils and runes of warding. These markings, through the ill-understood means of their artifice, project an aura around themselves which may slow the passage of time or project waves of force. Least well understood of all, the Pentacles may turn the gaze of the Warp back upon those fated with the gift of warp-sight, blinding them with the turmoil of the aether.

The Thousand Sons Legionaries who discovered these treasures promptly petitioned for them to be destroyed, gaining the support of the Navis Nobilite and the choir of the Astronomican. However, orders sent by the officers of the Sigillite dictated that they were instead to be prohibited from use and remanded to the Throneworld for further study. The barge carrying the entire collection to Terra was lost en-route and the articles within have since been seen on battlefields throughout the galaxy.

Any Independent Character model may replace their refractor field with a Psi-resonant Pentacle for +10 points, or their Iron Halo +5 points.

The Psi-resonant pentacle grants its wearer a 5+ invulnerable save. Any unit which contains models with the Psyker, Brotherhood of Psykers/ Sorcerers, Psychic Pilot, Daemon or Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule locked in combat with a model equipped with a Psi-Resonant Pentacle at the beginning of any Fight sub-phase has their Initiative characteristic reduced to 1 until the end of the Assault phase.

The Ever-changing Axiom

All but hidden beneath the surface of the presence which all sentient life projects into the Warp, there is a certain kind of sound which can be spoken as incantation. In the Halo Stars it is called the 'tongue of creation', on Artadane the 'voice of god', and on Drussen the 'language of unmaking'. The perfidious Eldar are said to know it and fear it as it is the 'vernacular of the Old Ones'. Only a few words of the Axiom are known, for to attempt to reconstruct the entire lexicon is strictly forbidden and would be beyond the combined capabilities of every data-scribe in a star system. When spoken aloud, in no more than a whisper, a practitioner can bend the fabric of reality and send shockwaves through the Immaterium. However, even an infinitesimally small slip of the tongue, or mistaken raising of the voice in anger can break reality and the speaker both, and each time such sounds are spoken they change in meaning.

One Praetor, Archmagos Prime or Lord Marshal in an army may take the Ever-changing Axiom for +60 points.

Once per game, a model may use the Ever-changing Axiom by speaking it during the Fight sub-phase at Initiative step 1. To speak the Axiom, the controlling player must roll a D3. If the result is a 1 or 2, place a number of Small Blast (3") markers equal to the number rolled, such that the centre of each blast is within 6" of the speaker. If the result rolled is a 3, place three Small Blast (3") markers centred on the speaker.

These blasts do not scatter. Any model wholly or partially under a marker suffers a Str 8 AP 2 hit. This ability does not grant the model an additional Pile In move at the Initiative 1 Step, and any wounds caused do not count towards combat resolution.

Transvectic Generators

Various relics have been classified as, or produced to be, Transvectic Generators, whether they act through esoteric means, such as the so called Warp-flasks or Athames of the XVIIth Legion, or by technological means such as the Aetherbaric Plough and Empyreal Split-piston held in the stasis vaults of the Phalanx. Regardless of the means by which these items function, they all act to create a short-ranged, stable tunnel through the unreality of the Warp by which a being no larger than a Legionary might traverse battlefield terrain or bypass fortifications entirely, relocating from one place to another in the blink of an eye via a Warp conduit. However, such casual dalliance with the powers of the Warp is not undertaken without considerable risk, and the surrounding field created by a Transvectic portal into the Immaterium can quickly become unstable and drag the user and others nearby permanently into unreality.

Any Librarian, Esoterist, Moritat, Diabolist or Saboteur Consul who is not equipped with a Jump Pack, Bike or Jetbike may take a Transvectic Generator for +25 points.

A model with a Transvectic Generator may not join any other unit. A Transvectic Generator allows a model to re-locate through the Warp up to 18" in any direction in lieu of moving in the Movement phase, ignoring intervening models and terrain. For all intents and purposes the model has moved as if using a Jump Pack, and this move has no effect on the model in further phases.

Whenever a model makes use of a Transvectic Generator, they must roll a D6. On the result of a 1, they immediately suffer the Dragged into the Warp result on the Perils of the Warp table, and any units within 3" of the model's starting location also suffer D6 Strength 6 AP 1 hits. For the purposes of wound allocation, assume the attack is coming from the model which suffered Perils of the Warp.

Aetherkine Projectors

These Immaterially charged weapons allow a telekine to project their psychic might in the form of focussed bolts of aetheric force. Such potent devices are re-engineered from ancient artefacts recovered early in the Great Crusade by the IXth Legion. They were discovered to be held by only by a single feudal community living within the ruins of the once-grand buildings of Chasqur IV, a world left largely barren and blackened, having never recovered from the brutal civil war between the planet's former psyker overlords and non-psyker peasant class centuries prior. The Aetherkine Projectors were liberated from the few survivors in their final stronghold, where they had been secured in fear of them being used to dominate their kith once again.

Any Praetor who is a Psyker, or a Librarian or Esoterist Consul in an army may take an Aetherkine Projector for +25 points.

An Aetherkine Projector is a Witchfire psychic power which is automatically known by the bearer. Instead of attempting to manifest this power normally, simply allocate the appropriate number of dice from the controlling player's Warp Charge pool during the Psychic phase towards this power. An Aetherkine Projector has three firing profiles, based on the number of Warp Charge points allocated. Once the weapon is fired, the Warp Charge is spent.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Aetherkine Projector				
(2 Warp Charges)	12"	3	2	Assault 2, Aetherkinetic Feedback
(3 Warp Charges)	18"	5	2	Assault 3, Aetherkinetic Feedback
(4 Warp Charges)	24"	7	2	Assault 4, Aetherkinetic Feedback

Aetherkinetic Feedback: Any roll of a 1 To Hit causes the bearer to suffer Perils of the Warp.

Terminal Lucidity Injectors

This device was discovered by the Dark Angels while destroying a large xenos city-compound on an oxygen-rich death world, whose name has since been purged from Imperial records. The world was commanded by the planet's tall and lithe masters, who lorded over a heavily muscled gene-bulked slave-stock of barely humanoid form. These creatures were spent as commodities of war against the other compounds of that world, which battled in competition for the planet's scarce mineral resources. The stocky warriors were bonded from birth with subcutaneous collars, carved with symbols of esoteric meaning, which siphoned a portion of the wearer's natural psychic energy over the course of their lifespan. At the end of their brutal lives, this life-force would be pumped directly back into their souls to send them into a death-induced fury of vitality.

Any Independent Character in an army may take a Terminal Lucidity Injector for +20 points.

When a model bearing a Terminal Lucidity Injector loses its last wound but before it is removed from play, it does one of the following:

If the model loses its last wound in the Shooting phase or Psychic phases: The model may immediately shoot its ranged weapon(s) at the unit which removed its last wound (or if that unit is out of range or line of sight, at the closest enemy unit) as if it was the controlling player's Shooting phase.

If the model loses its last wound in the Fight sub-phase: The model may make a Pile in move and make a single attack, regardless of whether or not it has already fought in that Assault phase, at Initiative Step 1.

Empath Bonds

The Empath Bond technology was recovered by the Iron Hands and Luna Wolves during the liberation of Genaesus II, in which they fought back hordes of unrestrained psykers. The source of this power was discovered after felling a group of psykers and it was found that they each shared a fragment of a psycho-active meteorite embedded in their flesh. All of these psykers were eradicated, and with them the knowledge of their bonding methods lost. Only through an extremely complicated aetheric process could two fragments of this material be bonded by the artifices of Imperial science, effectively forming an inextricable link between two psykers' souls, regardless of the distance between them. This allows the psykers to share their power, drawing upon each other's strength to make both far stronger than they would have been alone, as well as giving them the ability to transfer a portion of their own vitality to their partner in times of dire need.

Before the game begins, select two Independent Character models who are Psykers, have the Legiones Astartes special rule and are in the same Detachment to form an Empath Bond for +15 points per model. Only one pair of Psykers may share an Empath Bond in an army.

So long as both of the selected models which make up the Empath Bond are present on the table they gain the Eternal Warrior special rule. Additionally, if either model in an Empath Bond suffers Perils of the Warp, both models suffer the same effect on the Perils of the Warp table.

If at any point during the game a model in an Empath Bond loses a wound (other than from Perils of the Warp), so long as the other model in the Empath Bond can draw line of sight to the wounded model, it may attempt to reach into the aether and transfer the wound to itself. To do this, roll a D6:

- If the resulting roll is a 3 or higher, the original model does not suffer the wound, which is instead transferred to and therefore suffered by its partner in the Empath Bond. Once the wound has been transferred, no further attempts to reallocate it can be made.
- If the resulting roll is a 2, the attempt fails and the original model suffers the wound as normal.
- If the resulting roll is a 1, instead of stealing the pain of their bonded partner, the model absorbs the suffering of the wider battle and loses a wound with no saves of any kind allowed. The original model suffers the wound as normal.

Should one of the models within the Empath Bond be slain by any means other than being Dragged into the Warp, the Empath Bond is broken and has no further effect on the remaining model.

Sacrificial Innervation

One of the darkest rites of known esoterica, only the most desperately power hungry psykers undergo Sacrificial Innervation. In doing so, they forego the bounds of humanity and morality to sacrifice a piece of their own soul in pursuit of the deeper knowledge of the Warp. This trade of mortal essence for psychic essence can take many forms, such as ghastly blood rituals, sadistic carnivals of sacrifice and literal compacts with Daemons. Whatever the case, if successful, such a rite leaves the practitioner both greater and lesser than they once were. Though they may gain a new blaze of knowledge and power behind their eyes, their mortal forms are invariably shrivelled to husks of their former vitality, or else they are stalked by a beast of the Warp, waiting for but a moment of weakness.

Any Praetor who is a Psyker, Librarian, Esoterist or Diabolist Consul may take Sacrificial Innervation for +20 points.

A model which undergoes Sacrificial Innervation adds 1 to their Psychic Mastery Level (to a maximum of 4), and may choose to re-roll the dice when determining their Warp Charge pool. However, they also subtract -1 from their Wounds characteristic before the game begins.

The Digittalis Arcanis

Part ancient cogitation device, part psycho-biometric interface, the Digittalis Arcanis is a relic of the Dark Age of Technology which requires the arcane attentions of its wearer to function. Under the ministrations of those given to a particular kind of lore, a Digittalis Arcanis can be made to swell its owner with power, enhancing their reflexes and tolerance for pain as well as imparting an unearthly knowing in its bearer's mind. Though the boost is temporary, it can grant a warrior superlative abilities for the duration of a battle, filling them with a heady sense of greatness, which they would quickly come to crave after its passing. Repetitive desire for the power of the Digittalis Arcanis comes at a great cost however, as when the unnatural power ebbs, so too is a portion of the user's very soul sapped away into the device.

One Librarian, Diabolist or Esoterist Consul in a Detachment with at least two Psychic Mastery levels may take the Digittalis Arcanis for +30 points.

At the beginning of any of their turns, the controlling player may activate the Digittalis Arcanis. This grants the bearer an increase of +D3 to both their Attacks and Initiative characteristics until the end of their following player turn. After the effects of the Digittalis Arcanis have worn off, the bearer's Attacks and Initiative characteristics are reduced to 1 for the remainder of the game.

Divining Blades

Weapons of ancient provenance, forged from the unimaginably rare Nightmare Steel, the Divining Blades are relics far beyond mortal ken to comprehend. It is said of such weapons that they are keen enough to cut unreality and reality both when swung; that their subtle edges, which lie beyond both of those dimensions, can never be blunted; and that they have an oscillating frequency in synchronicity with the turning of the universe itself. Charged with untold ethereal power, a Divining Blade can locate and sever the true essence of a Daemon within the Warp if it passes into proximity with its edge, and thus these artefacts inspire a primal terror in Daemons which behold them. Examples of Divining Blades are extremely rare, and only the Warmaster is known to have possessed a collection of such blades, earned in conquest and bartered for by his agents over a century, indeed, it is possible he owned the majority of those examples to be found in our plane of existence. As a sign of the utmost favour, he gifted a single Divining Blade unto perhaps a score of warriors in whom he saw the greatest potential destinies in his war, each a single Divining Blade.

One model in an army may exchange their Paragon blade to a Divining blade for +30 points. A Divining blade has the following profile:

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Divining blade	Melee	+2	1	Melee, Instant Death, Master-crafted, Psy-Lash, Two-handed

Psy-lash: If a weapon with this special rule causes an unsaved wound on a model with the Daemon, Psyker, Brotherhood of Psykers or Psychic Pilot special rule then one randomly selected model in the unit with that special rule suffers Perils of the Warp in addition to any other damage.

Chogorian Dreamplate

Dreamplate is a layer of additional protection, as much physical armour as aetheric barrier, worn over the warplate of a worthy Legionary to guard against the darkest beasts of heaven. Storied pieces of warding armour, each example of Dreamplate is hand chiselled, lacquered and embellished by the Storm Seers of the White Scars. These are then granted to the most stoic of heroes amongst their own Legion, and gifted only to the most respected warriors among the other Legions. The White Scars' close allies were few during the Great Crusade, and it is for this reason Chogorian Dreamplate is a rare and much-prized possession for those few who are blessed to possess it, though by the time of the Horus Heresy many of the White Scars' own heroes had died and their hallowed protection was plundered by whoever could acquire it.

One Praetor, Centurion or Consul in an army may take Chogorian Dreamplate for +10 points.

A model equipped with Chogorian Dreamplate has a 3+ invulnerable save against any wounds caused by models with the Daemon or Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rules.

The Liber Magra Veneficarum

Copies of this ancient grimoire, within which is contained text from human and xenos histories which entirely contravene any and all of the tenets of the Imperial Truth, have been hunted by the Elucidators and burned on a thousand worlds. It is an evil work, full of the incantations and processes of ritual, designed to bring forth the terrors of the depths of the Warp. The original tome is thought to have been compiled during the darkness of Old Night and is lost, though many ritualist cultures have preserved hand copied examples of the grimoire through the millennia thereafter. Certain desperate and unscrupulous warriors among Horus' armies are thought to have acquired copies during the Age of Darkness, though even they surely knew it was a vile thing, which Mankind would be best served to forget.

Any Traitor Allegiance Independent Character (which is not a Psyker, Daemon or Daemon of the Ruinstorm) may take the Liber Magra Veneficarum for +25 points.

The Liber Magra Veneficarum grants the bearer one level of Psychic Mastery, but they are granted only the Incursion Malefic Daemonology power.

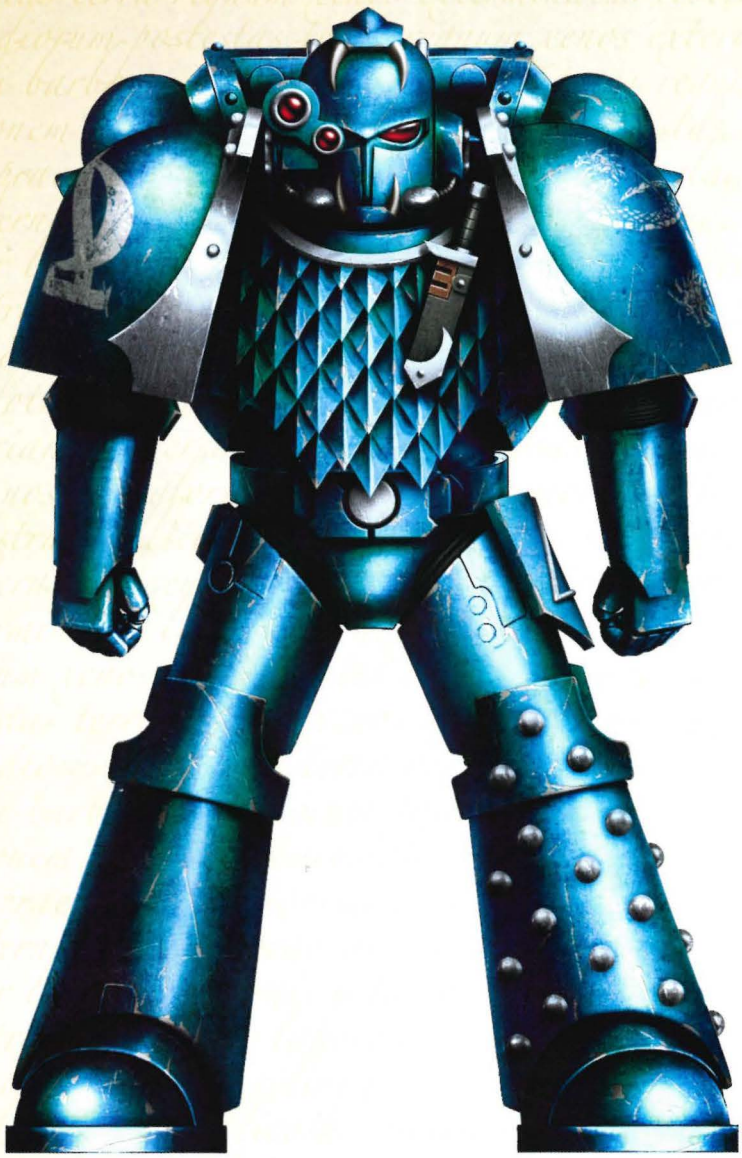
Icon of the Blazing Sun

The symbols of the Emperor, a golden Aquila, a shard of Fulgurite, an ornamented Raptora Imperialis, the Lightning Totem and the carving of Crossed Thunderbolts; these are the signs of the Blazing Sun. Holding these relics aloft and invoking His name, for some strange and inexplicable reason among those truly loyal creates an aversion in the scions of the Warp. The power of His title and symbols are said to be able to protect the faithful from the depredations of the creatures of the Warp, and from the evil intentions of psykers. However, to call upon His name in vain, or to lack true conviction and be found wanting in faith can lead to ever more dire consequences.

One Loyalist Allegiance Independent Character per Detachment may take an Icon of the Blazing Sun for +30 points.

If a Traitor Allegiance Psyker within 12" of the Icon successfully attempts to manifest any psychic power in the current Psychic phase, the bearer of an Icon of the Blazing Sun may attempt to nullify that power. To do so, the bearer of an Icon of the Blazing Sun must take a Leadership test. If the Leadership test is passed, the power does not manifest. If the Leadership test is failed, the power is manifested unaffected, and the bearer of an Icon of the Blazing Sun suffers a wound with no saves of any kind allowed. If the result of the test was a double 6, the bearer's faith is found wanting; they are consumed by the power they sought to invoke and are immediately removed from play with no saves of any kind allowed.

Additionally, any Daemon or Daemon of the Ruinstorm is reduced to Weapon Skill 1 when locked in combat with a model carrying an Icon of the Blazing Sun.



Alpha Legionnaire

Specialist Δ03342, Headhunter Kill Team Delta, Phemus IV Defence Cadre

This Alpha Legionnaire, bearing no personal heraldry other than a coded identification sigil, was pursued across the lava-scree slopes of Phemus IV by the Brotherhood of the Sable Wolf. Headhunters of the XXth Legion were repeatedly identified in the early stages of the Chondax Engagement on Phemus IV in advantageous sniping positions, while making opportunistic strikes against the engine blocks of White Scars' jetbikes. These strikes were not intended to kill, but to hamper and re-direct the Vth Legion's advance towards the hidden beacons of the Alpha Legion. It is thought Specialist Δ03342 was part of the cell which orchestrated these attacks.

After the death of the Brotherhood of the Sable Wolf's khan, the Moritat known as the Black Hound took command, making it his personal mission to track down and destroy the Alpha Legion Headhunters. Specialist Δ03342 is known to have fallen as part of this shadow war of unexpected snares and brutal surprise assaults. Originally suspected to be the Interfector, this Alpha Legionnaire fell at the hands of the Black Hound himself, who had scouted ahead of his Brotherhood to a likely sniping position, using their presence as bait, and there half-buried himself in volcanic ash, all but invisible until the Headhunter crossed his path.

Afterword

The Horus Heresy has come a long way from its humble beginnings as references in sources older now than many of its fans. Since then, it has lent itself to card games, board games, video games, and to Black Library's best-selling series which is now over 50 novels strong and loved by countless gamers and readers around the world. It was all of these things, alongside the many other allusions to the battles and mysteries of this epic setting which inspired Forge World's expansion to the sixth edition of Warhammer 40,000, The Horus Heresy Book One – Betrayal back in 2012, allowing players to, for the first time, collect the Space Marine Legions and fight their own legendary Horus Heresy battles on the tabletop.

This is the eighth volume in the same series of campaign books, which has been supplemented by army list books and has expanded to include the Mechanicum, Solar Auxilia, Imperialis Militia, Questoris Knight Households, Legio Custodes, Silent Sisterhood, Daemons of the Ruinstorm and the Titans of the Collegia Titanicus as factions available to collect and play using the standalone The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness ruleset. As the Horus Heresy game has changed, so too has the team behind it. For the seven volumes which preceded this one, Alan Bligh, who sadly passed away in 2017, was the driving power which captured the minds and imaginations of readers and inspired their games. We feel his loss keenly – he was a force of nature in adding to the richness of the tapestry of the Horus Heresy and we may never see his like again, and so we owe him an endless debt of gratitude.

We would also like to thank everyone who has worked on the Horus Heresy series to date, in particular those who have worked with us on this volume for their fantastic contributions to the production, writing, art, design and play-testing. All of which have come together to evoke the tragedy of Mankind's failure to achieve lasting grandeur on a galactic scale. Last but certainly not least we thank you, dear readers, for continuing to absorb these volumes and for playing games set during the Horus Heresy – without you none of this is possible.

It is our sincerest hope that you have enjoyed this book and that we have managed to uphold the mantle and legacy of the series which we so love. This is the beginning of a new era for the Age of Darkness, and we fully intend to bring you even more of the heroic and epic battles of the Horus Heresy in the years to come!

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